MYKOLAS ROMERIS UNIVERSITY

Jolanta Grigaliūnaitė

BEHAVIOUR OF LITHUANIAN BUSINESS INTEREST ASSOCIATIONS

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Scientific supervisor:

Prof. Habil. Dr. Vygandas Kazimieras Paulikas (Mykolas Romeris University, Social Sciences, Management and Administration, 03 S)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbrevations used in the thesis text

BIA – business interest association
CoEU – Council of the European Union
CoR – Committee of the Regions
EC – European Commission
EK – expert knowledge
EP – European Parliament
ESEC – European Social and Economic Committee
EU – European Union
IDEI – information about domestic encompassing interest
IEEI – information about the European encompassing interest
LoI – logic of influence
LoM – logic of membership
LT – Lithuanian
MDS – multidimensional scaling
MP – Member of Parliament
MS – member state
NA–not applied
PM – Prime Minister
Q – question
SMEs – small and medium enterprises

Abbrevations used in the statistical methods

ε_i – error term
df – determination coefficient
F – Fisher statistics
L – factor loading
p – significance
R – set correlation coefficient
r/itt – item total correlation
R^2 – consolidated determination coefficient
x_i – independent variable
y_i – dependent variable
β_0 and β_1 – constants

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INTRODUCTION[1]

Relevance of the research. The ways in which business interests organise themselves and participate in public policy formulation are influenced by the ongoing worldwide internationalisation of economic and political domains. Though this impact is of global nature, it is under observation particularly in Europe, as economic and political developments between the Member States (MSs) of the European Union (EU) progress (Wilts and Quitkatt 2003). For example, today, it is not the Member States but Brussels that sets the pace regarding product quality, competition rules or environment standards. Therefore, beginning with the construction of the European Single Market and the recent developments when the Lisbon Treaty came into force, these developments influence and change the ways business interests emerge, organise themselves, aggregate joint interests, plan access strategies and manage interrelations with public policy decision–makers. These activities are usually performed by formal business interest organisations that are called business interest associations (BIAs) and are 'rational organisations specialised in defining, aggregating, and promoting the political interests of a distinct group of producers or employers' (Schmitter and Streeck 1999, p. 20).

The course of European developments not only generates the appearance of new forms of BIAs and relations between BIAs and public policy makers at the European level, but also impacts existing patterns of BIAs and their interrelationships with public policy institutions at the domestic level of each separate Member State. The idea itself that organised business interests are engaged in the political realm is not a new concept (Schattscheider 1935), however, the ways domestic business interest associations do it varies (Wilts and Quitkatt 2003).

Lithuania has experienced a rapid and profound process of transformation which challenged both the national regime and organised interests landscape. The behaviour of the organised business interests in this dynamic environment deviates from the norm that is expected and found in more mature democracies (Pérez–Solórzano Borragán 2002). Therefore, social scientists argue that the characteristics of the behaviour of the business interest associational systems are deeply influenced and determined by the socio–economic and political developments of each single country (Lanzalaco 1992). Studies on organised business interests in postsoviet countries argue that the Soviet political system scenarios were constructed exclusively by state institutions themselves and interest groups were kept on the periphery and were not granted opportunities of participation in the public policy making process (Ágh 1999, Pérez–Solórzano Borragán 2004, Martin and Waller 1994, Lukošaitis 2004). Though business interest organisations were in operation during the Soviet era, they were usually controlled by the state and had little authority over their own activities. In addition, interest organisation membership was rarely on a voluntary basis (Žiliukaite, Ramonaitė, et al. 2006). Lithuania restored its independence and joined the European Union, and these changes were to entail

[1] The thesis has been a constituent part of the European 6FP project 'Connex – Network of Excellence: Connecting Excellence of European Governance' coordinated by Mannheim University, European Social Research Center (Germany).

re-ordering of the behaviour of BIAs and their interrelations with the state, however these changes did not lead to a professionalisation of the Lithuanian business associations' organisations and activities. Thus, national factors for BIAs' behaviour do not lose their importance even in the era of economic globalisation (Eising 2001) and should be studied more in detail.

Despite particular situation of the Lithuanian business interest associations, their behaviour and interrelations with the state are studied very rarely (Vilčinskas and Vijeikis 2007). Most of the studies mention the role of organised interest groups in Lithuania in general (Vilpišauskas and Nakrošis 2003), focus on the business interest representation tactics of certain Lithuanian BIAs at the national level (Broga 2001), analyse interests groups and their structure in general (Krupavičius 1998, 1999, Lifanova 1997), analyse interst groups networks (Kaminskas 2001a, 2001b) or look at lobbying in Lithuania[2] (Andrikienė 2002a, 2002b, 2004). The literature which analyses Lithuania's EU negotiations process and accession claims to be more analytical (Maniokas and Vitkus 1997, Vilpišauskas and Steponavičienė 2000, Maniokas, Vilpišauskas and Žėruolis 2004). However, none of the studies provide a solid theoretical framework, theoretical models or empirical data as to what models should be used to evaluate the behaviour of organised business interest groups and their interrelations with state institutions (Vilčinskas and Vijeikis 2007). Several other studies take the broader approach of civil society formation and discuss the input of interest groups into consolidating democracy in Lithuania (Lukošaitis 2004, Adomėnas, Augustinaitis and Janeliūnas 2007).

The previous discourse has led to the construction of the ***research problem*** statement for this thesis which partly rests on the lack of research in the field. Moreover, the embedded potential of the organised business interests is underused by Lithuanian business interest associations, though the existing scientific literature reiterates that business interests are the most organised and active segment of all other interests (Schmitter and Streeck 1999). The predominant characteristics of Lithuanian business interest associations seem to be internal organisational instability and fragmentation, elite dominance and mass passivity, a prevailing outsider status in contact with public policy institutions, and continuity of the ways of the old regime although transformations on the political stage could precondition professionalisation of the Lithuanian BIAs' behaviour.

In order to go towards solving the above research problem the doctoral thesis is challenged by the unobtrusive nature of business interests that restricts the common knowledge of the behaviour of business actors, as does the prevailing secrecy and confidentiality which traditionally surrounds business interests. Thus, numerous difficulties in accessing the necessary data for evaluation of business interests lead most of the studies to focus on the characteristics of Lithuanian BIAs that are externally visible and freely accessed, for example, official reports, documents, etc. The present thesis goes deeper than external manifestations and is based on the quantitative survey of 112 Lithuanian business interest associations conducted in

[2] The term 'lobbying' in the Lithuanian context is used to indicate the activity performed by lobbyist and which should be reported in official documents and which is charged (or not) as it is regulated by the Law on Lobbying (2003).

2007–2009 by the author for the first time in Lithuania, the results of which are presented and discussed in the doctoral thesis.

The research problem determines the ***subject of research*** – the behaviour of Lithuanian business interest associations and their relations with public policy institutions – and leads to the guided ***thesis objective*** – to analyse and explain, by providing an empirical account, the development and political behaviour of the Lithuanian business interest associations at national and European Union level and to discuss the type of the Lithuanian business interest associations one might expect in the future.

The problem statement and the objective have been used to guide the doctoral thesis in accordance with the following principal ***research questions***:

1. How did the Lithuanian BIAs develop and what are the characteristics of the behaviour of the Lithuanian business interest associations at national and European Union level?
2. How do Lithuanian business interest associations interrelate with public policy makers and what determines the patterns of access of Lithuanian BIAs to national and European public policy institutions?

The thesis research objective is implemented and thesis research questions are answered by realising the following ***tasks of the research****:*

1. To analyse and determine the characteristics of the landscape of the Lithuanian organised business interests.
2. To determine and analyse major theoretical models for the evaluation of behaviour of BIAs and their relations with public policy institutions and suggest the model for evaluation of the behaviour of the Lithuanian BIAs and their relations with public policy institutions and build model's research instrument.
3. To apply the suggested model for evaluation of behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs and their relations with public policy institutions and investigate the organisational and sectoral domains of the Lithuanian BIAs and assess their impact upon Lithuanian BIAs' behaviour and their relations with public policy institutions.
4. To explain the behaviour of the Lithuanian BIAs and their relations with public policy institutions based on theoretical and practical research outcomes and provide recommendations for further development.

Methods of Research

The attempts made in this doctoral thesis to develop an understanding of the Lithuanian business interest associations' behaviour and interrelations with public policy institutions require a completely new quantitative survey, as no such comprehensive survey of the Lithuanian business interest associations had ever been performed before.

The following methods were applied:

- Analysis of scholarly literature: examination of the theories of groups, interest–state interrelations, access to public authorities and European Union integration and their impact upon business interests behaviour. Based on the

above theoretical framework the model for evaluation of Lithuanian business interest associations has been proposed;

- Quantitative research: based on the proposed model of evaluation of behaviour of business interest associations a quantitative survey instrument – the questionnaire – has been constructed. Validity and reliability of the research instrument tested with psychometric statistics;
- Survey: 112 Lithuanian business interest associations were surveyed in the period 2007–2009. Rate of return of the survey: 75%. The survey statistical data was processed in line with a research scheme.
- Analysis of the data and calculations were made with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences programme. The research methods applied in the statistical analysis of the data include: correlation, linear regression, factor analysis and multidimensional scaling. The thesis statements' tests were based on Mann-Whitney U criterion.

Theoretical Framework and Novelty of the Research

The scientific value of the research is determined by its scientific novelty. In attempting to develop an understanding of the behaviour of Lithuanian business interest associations and their interrelations with public policy institutions, this doctoral thesis demanded a completely new survey of Lithuanian business interest associations, as no comprehensive data existed. The thesis approached its major objective from the perspective of various theories: the theory on state-organised interests and state-business relations and EU integration theories, and developed an integrated analytical framework based on the mentioned theories and the models of logic of membership and logic of influence to investigate domestic business interest associations on two levels, i.e., the national and European level. The model provided for evaluation of the behaviour of the Lithuanian BIAs was proven with the current research and, as a result, provided new dimensions to the theoretical knowledge on BIAs' behaviour. Thus, the research has positive implications for social science as it contributes to how domestic BIAs' behaviour could be investigated and can be applied for future research. Furthermore, the findings of the research contribute to the Europeanisation of the related literature in its indirect way as it analyses domestic BIAs of one of the EU Member States at national level.

Moreover, the research is important along another set of two scientific dimensions. On one hand, investigation of the BIAs' behaviour can further advance the theory of the relationship between economic actors and state institutions. Thus, the thesis contributes to the literature on pluralist and corporatist systems of organised interests. Moreover, Lithuania as post–Soviet country provides excellent case because business–state relations are still in the process of formation, while in the developed capitalist countries such processes are generally completed. On the other hand, an investigation such as this contributes to the on–going exploration of economic transitions and evolving patterns of governance in the post–Soviet countries. Identifying the causes of business interest group formation and divergent patterns of interest representation in different economic sectors is a critical step in advanc-

ing a more general understanding of the development of civil society in general in post–Soviet countries.

The Practical Importance of the Research

The research should respond to a twofold obligation: first, it should relate to a real world problem and, second, contribute to scholarly literature (King, Keohane and Verba 1994, p. 15). From a practical perspective, the conducted research contributes and increases the knowledge on how Lithuanian business interest associations organise and operate at the national and European levels. The data of the research is rewarding material that practically explains how the organisation and functioning of Lithuanian BIAs happens. The gained 'know–how' part of the research can be applied in practice by, on the one hand, business interest associations and, on the other hand, public policy makers at national and European level. BIAs could apply this knowledge while planning their behaviour and the public policy makers could benefit from the findings of the research by getting acquainted with them and while planning their consultation procedures, which is part of the legal act adoption scheme and includes stakeholders from society, including business interest associations.

Knowledge accumulation, as argued by Mahoney (2003, p. 134), and the building of empirical information are among the central parts of the research. King, Keohane et al. (1994) argue that in the cases where the research lacks earlier empirical material, it is indispensable to render a solid description. Giving a description is not only a first step in the causal analysis, but also a goal in itself (ibid. p. 75). The thesis makes a practical contribution to the understanding of Lithuania, by providing a map of Lithuanian BIAs and their behaviour and the patterns of the interrelations with the state.

Whilst the previous analysis of associational activity in Lithuania relies entirely on secondary sources, the core of the thesis is based on the quantitative survey of 112 Lithuanian business interest associations conducted in 2007–2009. The scope of the research is representative and wide enough to generate broadly generalised conclusions about Lithuanian BIAs. The quantitative research results to some extent replace the 'kaleidoscope of impressions' (Kohler–Koch 2005) that have been established by the appearance of information in mass media regarding business interests.

Research approbation

Publications:

1. Grigaliūnaitė, J., 2010. 'Business Interest Associations in Lithuania: Status, Role and Prospects', *Socialinių mokslų studijos*, MRU, Vilnius, Vol. 5, No. 5, pp. 63-84.

2. Grigaliūnaitė J., Mačiukaitė-Žvinienė S. 2006, 'Looking for Civil Participation in the Baltic States: Non-Governmental Sector', *Viešoji politika ir administravimas*, MRU and KTU, Vilnius, No. 17, pp. 115-123.

Presentations at seminars:

1. Grigaliūnaitė J., 2005 October 16-18, presentation 'Lithuanian BIAs: Research Design', Mannheim University, European Social Research Center (Germany), CONNEX network seminar, 'Civil Society Involvement in European Governance'.

2. Grigaliūnaitė J., 2006 May 20-26, presentation 'Lithuanian BIAs: Empirical Research Particularities', Mannheim University, European Social Research Center (Germany), CONNEX network seminar 'Applied Empirical Social Research'.

3. Grigaliūnaitė J., 2006 June 26-30, presentation 'Lithuanian BIAs: Landscape', European University Institute, Florence (Italy), NEWGOV-CONNEX network seminar 'New Modes of Governance: Theoretical Approaches and Research Methods'.

4. Grigaliūnaitė J., 2007 September 14-15, presentation 'Lithuanian BIAs: Interest Intermediation System', Mannheim University, European Social Research Center (Germany), CONNEX network seminar 'Civil Society Involvement in European Governance'.

Doctoral thesis structure

The doctoral thesis consists of three major parts, an introduction and conclusions. The introduction illustrates the relevance of the research, navigates through the research problem to the research objective, research questions and tasks, presents the applied methods, and discusses the scientific and practical novelty of the doctoral thesis.

The first part of the thesis builds the theoretical framework discussing society-state interrelations approaches and their critics; interest groups' behaviour approaches in the context of EU integration theories and the access approach are outlined.

The second part serves as a methodological bridge of the present thesis, operationalising and translating theoretical concepts into concrete observable research indicators, introducing and proving the relevance of the quantitative research method, research construct and reasoning the choice of the data gathering strategy. The second part of the thesis introduces the model of the behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs which has been built according to the analysed scientific literature, the theory of interrelation between interests and the state, and the models of logic of membership and logic of influence.

The third part of the thesis presents and theoretically and statistically analyses the findings of the quantitative survey of Lithuanian BIAs. The third part presents the analysis of the behaviour of Lithuanian business interest associations and their interrelations with decision-makers at the national level and the European Union level. The third part also presents the evaluation of the research statements.

The thesis consists of 166 pages (excluding annexes). There are 43 tables and 24 figures presented in the thesis, and 217 literature references have been used. The thesis is supplemented and additionally substantiated by information presented in 4 annexes.

PART 1 SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH ON INTERESTS INTERRELATIONS WITH STATE

The aim of this part of the thesis is to develop a theoretical framework to study the complexity of behaviour of Lithuanian business interest associations and their interrelations with public policy institutions at national and European Union level. Furthermore, the national and European Union political institution systems are analysed and variety of models of business interest associations' behaviour are discussed.

1.1. THEORETICAL DISCOURSE ON BUSINESS INTERESTS

This chapter of the thesis defines the major concepts of business interest associations, their behaviour, interest representation and intermediation tactics and strategies, etc. and their application and builds theories on interrelations between business interests and the state. Moreover, the chapter analyses the European Union integration theories and how they are reflected on business interest associations' behaviour.

1.1.1. Defining the Major Concepts

Voluntary organisations represent various interests and act independently from the state. Putnam (1993, p. 123) defines them as civil associations that contribute to the stability and efficiency of democratic governance due to their 'internal' impact upon their members and the 'external' impact upon political decision makers. Internally associations develop their members' ability to cooperate and act with solidarity and civil spirit, i. e., the associations' members are characterised by a high degree of political sophistication, social trust and participation and certain (usually subjective) political competence. Externally, a network of voluntary associations encourages the articulation and aggregation of interests. In other words, such voluntary associations, first of all, enable their members to be politically active actors in society and, secondly, they become a link between society and the state. De Tocqueville (1988, p. 82) sees the 'art of association' as fundamental to the democratic well–being of society.

When the interactions among the members of a voluntary association become structured, it becomes an organised association. If formal and structured interaction among the association's members is lacking, it remains a potential association (Truman 1951, p. 151). Truman (ibid.) names the most widely used classification of organised associations as follows:

1. Business interest associations;
2. Labour unions and
3. Public interest associations.

Business interest associations are considered to be the most organised associational groupings due to their impact upon the state's economy and welfare (Schmitter and Streeck 1999, p. 20). Business interest associations are rational organisa-

tions specialised in defining, aggregating, and promoting the political interests of a distinct group of producers or employers (ibid.). Business interest associations are also defined as 'a form of regulation in which firms join together and delegate to a central body the rights and powers to promote common interests, regulate relations within the industry, and order relations between members and those whose strategies and activities can decisively affect the industry's fortunes' (Schneiberg, Hollingsworth et al 1990, p. 322). Furthermore, business interest associations are termed as collective organisations formed among specific categories of actors in identical, similar, or adjacent market positions that define and promote public (or categorical) goods. According to Hollingsworth, Schmitter, et al (1994, p. 4) they do so in three ways, by:

1. Organizing and enforcing cooperative behavior among their members;
2. Engaging in collective contracts with other associations;
3. Mobilising and/or influencing public policy to their own and their members' advantage.

As it has already been mentioned, organised interest groups hold the linking position between the state and society. BIAs assume the dual role of acting towards both directions: society and state. Scholars agree (Nadvi 1999, Fazi and Smith 2006, Lukošaitis 2004) that BIAs also assume the following functions:

1. Accumulation, analysis, intermediation and share of relevant information, formulation of common positions on important issues;
2. Representation and defence of employers' interests that should counterbalance the interests of employees (trade unions, sometimes public institutions) at a public authority;
3. Representation of interests to general society and mass media, requiring clear public relations. BIAs are forced to explain to society the logics behind the represented interests, and
4. Provision of concrete business services such as seminars, information and library services, exhibitions and trade fairs, foreign contacts, contract adjudication, specialised legal advice and assistance, certification of documentation and of product quality, and to serve as an arena for social contact between members, an arena or even a 'cover' for cartel arrangements and participation in the framing and/or implementation of public policy, including the performance of regulatory duties for their members.

BIAs can survive and prosper only when their policies are legitimate and effective. From the point of view of members of BIAs, they are legitimate when they manage to aggregate the relevant objectives and needs of their members and transform them into operational policy objectives. BIAs are effective when they establish mechanisms of influence which make it possible for their policy objectives to find their way towards a decision making process for their interlocutors. From the point of view of their interlocutors, BIAs are legitimate and effective when they represent as many actors of certain sector as possible and when they discipline their members in the interest of some wider collectivity. Thus, the performance of the functions of BIAs can be assured when BIAs have certain internal structures (Traxler and Schmitter 1994). The activities that business interest associations engage in

are encompassed and covered by one definition – BIAs' behaviour (Michalowitz 2005).

The provided definitions agree that business interest associations are, on the one hand, interest groups and, on the other hand, formal organisations. Voluntary associations share several common features and one of them is the non–profit nature of their activities. Business interest associations also are non–profit–seeking organisations and the interests they represent are characterised as public interests, as it is considered that the well being of economic interest groups positively conditions the welfare of society as a whole, in the sense of creating jobs, improving business environment etc. and as in contrast to serving private interests. However, the position of business interest associations is special in the sense that the public interests represented by business interest associations belong to the scope of interests of a specific category of society, i.e. employers and, moreover, the constituent members of non–profit associations are businesses, capital owners enjoying their discretionary power to make investments, and certainly, profit–seeking enterprises. The latter situation distinguishes business interest associations from the series of other voluntary organisations, though not completely eliminating them from their 'circle'. Therefore, the analysis of business interest associations and their behaviour should bear different approaches. Besides, the associations act as open systems, therefore, it is not only internal factors that influence an association's operation, but external factors also have an influence upon its behaviour. Therefore, scholars argue that associations existing as organisations should be analysed from the various viewpoints identified in different theories (Daft 1992, Domarkas 2001).

The behaviour of a business interest association is dependent upon its organisational design – namely, its properties and functions. Regarding the functions, an association is traditionally involved in 'four types of activities: participation for members, representation of members, services to members, and control over members' (Schmitter and Streeck 1999, p. 19–20). Each of the mentioned activities corresponds to a certain type of good: solidaristic or collective, public, selective or authoritative. When an association structures itself organisationally to provide only one type of good, it can be transformed into quite a different type of organisation: an association tending to the provision of only selective goods to its members–cum–clients becomes very much like a business company; in cases where an association pursues its goal to influence by exerting pressure on public authorities, ignoring the encouragement of members' participation or service provision or members' control, it is very likely that such an association will turn into a social movement; an association, which through licensing or policing acquires the ability to provide authoritative goods looks very much like a private government; and, finally, an association which is only concerned with the exchange and consumption of collective goods among its members and is based on a high degree of internal interaction and consensus about the association's goals acquires the characteristics of a club (Schmitter and Streeck, 1999, p. 20). The above described perception of multiple organisational imperatives serves to delimit a certain space and sets constraints within which BIAs should operate. The complex set of functions including participation, representation, provision of services and control over members which

any given BIA should acquire is limited by the two logics: the logic of membership and the logic of influence, which will be presented in detail in the following part of the thesis.

Still, in scientific literature there is agreement that one of the major functions of BIAs is interest representation of their members. However, the concept of interest representation as conveying an impression of a BIA as being a transmitter of the demands and preferences of its members, or, worse, representative in the statistical sense of the term and that interest representation is the exclusive or even predominant task of BIAs, is generally destructive (Schmitter 1977, pp. 35–6). The more exact term found in scolarly literature is interest intermediation, as the focus is on the fact that a BIA not only expresses interests but also articulates the preferences of its members, plays an important role in educating its members and what their interests shoud be, and assumes the private governmental functions of resource allocation and social control (ibid.). The term lobbying in the Lithuanian context is only used to indicate that interest representation activity is charged, as it is regulated by the Law on Lobbying of the Republic of Lithuania (2003).

Interest intermediation tactics[3] describe the individual external activities in which business interest associations engage, such as meeting with legislators, filing suits, or mounting advertisement campaigns. When a BIA decides to work on a particular issue, it should make decisions about which governmental targets to focus on and what type of approach to use (Baumgartner and Leech 1998, p. 147).

Van Schendelen (1994 p. 15) identifies two major groups of tactics, depending on who is the major actor organising the tactics:

1. Direct (personal visit, personal letter, phone, informal contact, hearing, public action group, mass demonstration), and
2. Indirect (friends inside the system, assistants of decision makers, mid–level civil servants, science: studies, reports, scholars, consultants, affiliated interest groups, political parties, election campaigning, mass media, adverts, publicity, court procedures).

The further aspect up for consideration is interest intermediation strategies which involve some particular combination of tactics and imply a mechanism by which influence is believed to be achieved. Strategies are combinations of these tactics used in particular situations. BIAs may have similar repertoires of tactics available for use, but their strategies of interest intermediation will vary depending on factors such as the issue at hand, the predispositions of those making the decision, and the strategies of others attempting to influence the same policy–makers (Baumgartner and Leech 1998, p. 162).

Most BIAs use a wide variety of interest intermediation tactics rather than relying on a single method in their efforts to influence politics, and secondly, the choice of tactics depends on the characteristics of the situation/issue just as much as it depends on the characteristics of the group (ibid. pp. 147–148). A BIA considers its human, financial and time resources, the area of its activities, the issue under discussion, and the character of the institution which is going to be ‘influenced’ be-

[3] Another synonymous term to ‘tactics’ found in scholarly literature is ‘method’, ‘technique’ (Van Schendelen 1994).

fore choosing the most suitable interest intermediation tactics. The choice of strategies depends also upon the group's organisational characteristics and its political context (ibid. p. 163).

Interest intermediation strategies can be divided into two major groups[4]:

1. Insider strategies (including tactics of legislative interest representation, administrative interest representation, litigating, and electioneering; BIAs following insider's strategies regarding administrative responsibilities, personal contacts, and position papers are particularly important in representing their interests), and
2. Outsider strategies (such as protesting, providing speakers and sponsoring lay conferences; another outsider strategy includes resorting to the media and to the public in order to represent interests) (ibid. pp. 163–164).

BIAs rarely resort to outsider strategies if they attach great value to close relationships with state institutions (Wilson 1973, Warntjen and Wonka 2004). Outsider strategies tend to be (1) value loaded (e.g. in the case of the campaign on genetically modified products); (2) not really negotiable if the actors do not wish to risk their credibility; and above all, (3) the success of the campaign depends on the support of the public, which means there is little control over the results (Eising 2005).

Regarding the routes chosen for interest intermediation, the strategies can be implemented on a sectoral platform or cross–sectoral platform, in an international network or inter–regional network, through public–private cooperation or going directly alone (Van Schendelen 1994).

All interest intermediation tactics fall within the scope of the objectives that are pursued. According to the definition provided by Van Schendelen (ibid.), interest intermediation tactics can be:

1. Issue manipulation;
2. Coalition building;
3. Agenda–formation;
4. Clientalism, patronage;
5. Procedural action;
6. Reasoned argumentation;
7. Rewards and compliance;
8. Coercion, punishment;
9. Mass mobilisation;
10. Public relations campaign.

American scholars Scholzman and Tierny (1986) distinguish 27 interest intermediation techniques: (1) participation at hearings and listening to the arguments presented by the legislatives, (2) direct relations with public officials with the aim to present one's own position, (3) informal contacts with public officials (dinner,

[4] In addition, many studies also distinguish the third group. i. e., nationalistic strategies. They often appear in multi–national surroundings (Walker 1991). A nationalistic strategy appears when BIAs basically focus on the nationality, for example, the language spoken by an EU official while selecting a contact person for interest representation, thereby limiting access to other public policy decision makers (Eising 2005, p. 16).

conferences, etc.), (4) presentation of research results and technical information, (5) letters to the members of the organisation informing about the activities, (6) coalition building with other organisations, (7) modeling the implementation of political decisions, (8) contacts with mass media, (9) consultations with public officials on political agenda planning, (10) support for the legislation, (11) the organisation of a letter/telegram writing/sending campaign, (12) formation of a political agenda by raising new issues and directing focus on previously unnoticed topics, (13) raising the lobbying efforts of ordinary citizens, (14) contacts with important and influential voters who have relations with elected representatives, (15) support in preparing drafts of legal acts, statutes or guidelines, (16) work at various commissions and boards, (17) informing public officials on the effectiveness of certain legal acts functioning in separate regions, (18) bringing political decisions to court, starting legal cases, (19) financial support for election campaigns, (20) services for public officials who need support, (21) exerting influence in the process of somebody filling a particular public service position, (22) promotion of candidates' voting records, (23) direct address and letter writing with requests for financial support for the organisation, (24) advertising the organisation's position on certain issues in mass media, (25) supporting election campaigns with work and human resources provision, (26) formation of public approval for candidates, and (27) participation in protests and demonstrations.

BIAs have a wide choice of numerous tactics and strategies to cope with acting in the political arena as it can be seen from the previous paragraphs. The political arena is crowded with numerous players, such as political figures and state institutions[5] that business interests seek to influence (Pedler 2002). State institutions or a state authorities make political decisions. Interest groups and other organisations in society try to influence them and become participants in the political decision–making process. It is important to emphasise that the political decision process, however, does not end with the adoption of a legal act. The next important stage is implementation of the legal act. State institutions play a leading role in the implementation stage and are targeted by interest groups and other organisations willing to exert influence in the decision formation or implementation stage (Anderson 1994, Raipa 2001, Warleigh and Fairbrass 2002). Therefore, all the tactics and strategies of business interest associations aim to influence the state authority in order to get a favourable change in the legal act or initiate a legal act itself, or to influence its implementation.

Scholars agree that influence is not possible without access to the state institution. Therefore, important attention in the thesis is given to acces, i. e. real contact patterns with public policy institutions. Eising (2005) defines access as the frequency of contact between a state institution and an interest group. This definition focuses on the fact that interest groups obtain actual contact with state institutions and do not just aim at them. Contact can range from *ad hoc* meetings to formal arrangements at the committees of Parliament, etc. Access is the result of an effective

[5] The term 'state institution' is interchangeably applied with the synonymous terms found in scholarly literature, 'state authority' and 'public policy institution'.

attempt by an interest group to approach the institutions or of its incorporation into policy–making by state institutions (ibid.).

Evaluation of access remedies the problematic issue about interest intermediation, i.e., the success or influence of BIAs that has always been quite a complicated issue in social science. Instead of explicitly focusing on influence itself, this thesis follows the approach of an interest group's access to state institutions without trying to detect whether the access was translated into concrete policy outcomes (Van Schendelen 1994, Bouwen 2002, Woll 2006). Access, in the thesis, is regarded as a *condition sine qua non* to exercise any influence in the political arena. Therefore, Hansen (1991, 1992) states that studying access is a correct indicator of influence. Truman (1951) emphasises that power of any kind cannot be reached by a political interest group without *access* to one or more key points of decision making in government. Truman (ibid.) also stresses that the development and improvement of *access* is a common denominator of the tactics of all interest groups. In such cases, *access* becomes the facilitating intermediate objective of BIAs and one of the major criteria characterising the interrelation between organised interests and state institutions.

Access can be distinguished between direct and indirect. Whereas direct access means direct interface between a BIA and the institution, indirect access needs an intermediate body, e.g. a consultant, membership in national BIA or European BIA, etc. It is a generally accepted notion that private interests prefer having direct access to state authorities because a 'go–between' can filter information and interpret the message in its own way.

The previously introduced concepts of business interest association, its behaviour, interest representation and intermediation tactics and strategies, access to the political arena and the political arena itself are indispensable for the thesis because they help to maintain conceptual uniformity throughout the theoretical, methodological and empirical parts of the thesis. Some other minor – though important for the research – terms appearing later in the thesis are defined in the chapters and sections where they originally appear.

1.1.2. Building Theory on the State–Business Interests Relations

As it was already described voluntary interest organisations operating in any society are indispensable in order to integrate different economic, political, cultural, social and other interests into the political process. Not only are political parties important, but also organised interest groups intermediating between the state and society are important tributaries of the democratic political process.

Any organisational activity occupying the position between a state and society mediates the two spheres and thereby resolves the central problematic issue of democratic theory: the tension between the state as the source of authority and society as the embodiment of popular sovereignty (Padgett 2000, Wincott 2003). Though it is important to note that in the Soviet era stressing the hierarchical nature of political control and the penetration of the whole of society by the state and the party, the traditional approach showed a clear tendency of denying the existence of inter-

est organisations. The only area where different interests could appear was argued to be among top leaders and in a limited degree of bureaucratic competition among the sections of administrative power, such as the military, police, party and the state (Skilling 1971, Schneider and Tenbücken 2002). Major possible interactions nowadays between society and state are depicted in Figure 1.

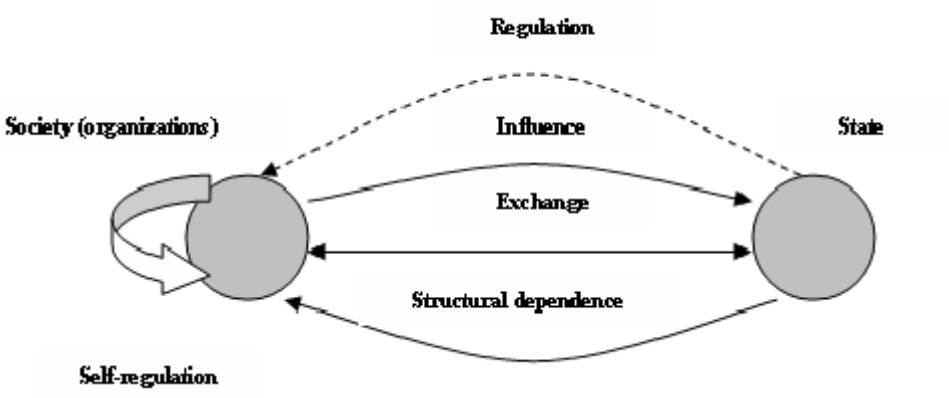


Figure 1 Relations between society and the state[6]

Relations between society and the state are outlined by the multi–dimentional characteristics of structural dependence, exchange, influence and regulation. The latter manifests itself in many different ways by state institutions at a local, regional or national level (Tolliday 1991): (1) by regulations, ranging from legally binding laws to administrative circulars and statements, (2) financially, from raising taxes, premiums and tariffs to spending on facilities and subsidies, (3) by economic behaviour, ranging from consuming private goods and services (public procurements) to producing public goods and services (deprivatisation), and (4) institutionally, by distributing power positions, taking care of special interests, selecting social values for policy making and otherwise. As a response to regulation, society organisations exert their influence.

Various relationships between the state and business appear at the heart of the political debate. On the one hand, the state is seen as a police officer controlling the business sector. On the other hand, the state is supposed to be a 'friend' of business, offering protection from foreign competition, such as cheap loans, etc. In addition, the state is a customer of business. The relationship between the state and business takes on different forms. Wilson (2003) distinguishes the following forms. Firstly, the state establishes a legal framework in which commercial activities are conducted. Though we talk of liberal markets, they rely on the underlying framework of laws and regulations. The legal framework, the so–called rules of the game, is likely to favour some interests over others rather than being neutral. Tax

[6] Source: adapted from Schneider and Tenbücken 2002 p. 3.

regulations, like all laws, tend to favour one business over others. Secondly, the state imposes limits on market relationships as no state leaves everything open to market forces, for example, health care, education, etc., because of the claims that other goals and values are so important that they override market forces. Thirdly, the state itself is a major customer of business buying a wide range of 'products' such as the construction of schools, roads, hospitals, etc. In addition, most of the state's expenditure goes towards transfer payments. Fourth, businesses rely on the state to protect and defend their interests overseas. This involves state assistance in ensuring that business property is not expropriated without fair compensation, that a business is not nationalised, and that loans are repaid (in the case of banks). Moreover, businesses expect their interests to be represented in international trade agreements made by states. It is argued that in the era of globalisation, businesses need state assistance even more in order to obtain favourable trading agreements and the protection of property (including intellectual property) overseas. Fifth, businesses are dependent on the state to maintain sound economic conditions, generally defined as acceptable levels of inflation and employment. Sixth, business is an important supplier of resources to the state in the form of income tax, social security contributions, etc.

It is important to appreciate the multi–faceted relationship between the state and business. Some issues tend to unite businesses vis–à–vis the state and others – to divide. For example, some favourable legal amendments for trade unions usually unite businesses. However, the issue of tax allowances traditionally divides business interests. State–business relationships fluctuate between the comparatively loosely organised end, which is called pluralism, to the highly structured and hierarchical end, called corporatism (Wilson 2003, p. 8). In fact, since around 1970 the major focus of interest representation has generally been on a pluralist–corporatist division to which the scholars still refer, also adding other types of state–society interrelations. Therefore, the further debate on state–business interest interrelations will be based on two basic models: pluralism and corporatism. Statism and other models that also appeared are interchangeably introduced as well.

In the pluralist mode[7] state and society are separated. The state's role is reduced to providing an arena where inter–group competition and bargaining take place, acting as a referee in balancing various groups' interests or being itself a set of arenas of pluralist politics where state institutions behave in a partisan manner, that is, they are in competition with other partisan state actors (Berger 1981). The associational system that emerges from the pluralist process is characterised by a large variety of heterogeneity of competing interest groups (Wagemann 2005). In the pluralist model, interest groups are the product of autonomous associational activity on the part of beneficiaries, with a professional staff limited to the function of organisational maintenance. Pluralism suggests a loose–jointed relationship, with a competitive multiplicity of interest groups jostling for influence whilst the state retains its autonomy (Padgett 2000).

[7] It is important to mention that pluralism is an *American scholarly concept*. It was the system of interest groups in the USA which corresponded best to the major pluralist proposition.

In a pluralist system separate businesses are the dominating actors. The majority of interactions between state and business take the form of dealings between separate businesses (companies) and state institutions. There are business interest associations in a pluralist system too. Low–order associations unite companies and high–order associations or peak associations unite smaller low–order associations and in some cases separate companies. In a pluralist system companies tend to choose to become members of both low–order and high–order associations, mainly because they agree with their policies or feel that they receive good value for the membership fee. However, BIAs are constrained because the companies that do not agree with the joint position adopted by the BIA are very likely to leave a BIA in a pluralist system by weakening it in terms of its income and reliability as representing the interests of a particular industry as a whole. Wilson (2003) argues that the relationship between the state and business in a pluralist system is a customer–client relationship because separate businesses remain members of BIAs as long as they receive value for money, important services and information, etc. In this sense low–order and high–order business interest associations find themselves in competition claiming to be more effective than their rivals.

Regarding the relationship between the state and business in the context of a pluralist system, several types of pluralism can be distinguished: orthodox pluralism, revisionist pluralism and structuralist pluralism (Lindblom 1977, Wilson 2003, Saurugger 2003). Orthodox pluralists argue that business interest groups do not differ from other interest groups. Revisionist pluralists maintain that a business interest group is not just another interest group as it possesses resources and, therefore, enjoys more power and dominates the interest groups system. Structuralist pluralists too state that business interest groups have a privileged position as not only do they have resources to influence state institutions, but also the unusual capacity to influence public opinion. The latter is possible due to business' special position in investing in a country's economic growth, prosperity and increasing employment levels. Besides, businesses can always threaten to move away to another location with more favourable conditions.

In a neo–pluralist model state institutions are impartial referees that are consciously searching for public interests that are not represented. Moreover, when these interests are found they are subsidised and supported (Lindblom 1977).

The last decades of the last century witnessed the evolution of a new type of pluralism – hyper–pluralism. The hyper–pluralism model is characterised by the existence of a particularly large number of interest groups, some of which are focused on single–issue representation. In this model, business interests cannot be said to dominate. Hyper–pluralism interest groups focus more on ideological principles and represent them in a rather radical manner (Lukošaitis 2004, pp. 179–212).

The structural elements of the corporatist model[8] of interest intermediation are in diametric opposition to those of a pluralist one. 'Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organised into a

[8] Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden are often regarded as countries of a corporatist tradition (Eising 2004, Falkner 1999).

limited number of singular, compulsory, non–competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognised or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a liberative representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports' (Schmitter 1974, pp. 93–94). The number of interest groups is limited to a small number of major organisations. The corporatist idea strongly emphasises the active role of the state in the organisation of collective interest in several ways by (quasi–) compulsory membership, founding, subsidising, state–licensing, etc. State interventions do not only influence forms of organised interests but the interests of groups themselves (Schmitter 1981, pp. 92–114). Thus, public interventions affect the quality of interest representation either positively by creating certain advantages, or negatively by resulting in relative suppression.

In this corporatist more organised and structured model of a state–business relationship, the significance of a separate company is reduced and that of a low–order and high–order BIA is increased. Companies are usually required (in some countries, even legally required) to belong to the relevant BIA which, in turn, belongs to a peak or high–order BIA which represents business as a whole. In the corporatist model BIAs encompass and recruit a very high proportion of companies. A separate company not belonging to any BIA runs a substantial risk as its interests are not represented effectively with state institutions. The latter also focus on BIAs while searching for a partnership. A separate company trying to push its interests might arouse suspicions that some special illegitimate interest is being represented.

In neocorporatism, the boundaries between state and society are not clear. The state performs the role of a mediator who tries to integrate the conflicting interests of peak associations that represent their functional domains. In negotiations, state and peak associations try to find consensus in the problems of particular sectors. Interest groups are on equal footing with state actors as they work towards not only the formulation of some rules, as in the corporatist model, but also on their effective implementation. Interest organisations assume quasi–public functions and intermediate between the demands of the state and their members (Eising 2004, p. 218).

Furthermore, one other model, statism**,** refers to the model where private interests have no significant role in the public decision–making process[9]. In the statist mode, the state is an authority above society, legitimated by the democratic vote and pursuing a common 'national' interest. Therefore, state actors are the dominant actors in policy formulation. In statist mode, interest groups play a minimal role; i.e., participation in policy formulation is limited to a small number of organised interests. Many interest organisations are included in political processes only after the basic contours of a policy have been outlined, often politicising the later stages of the policy–making process so that policy implementation becomes characterised by 'the politics of accommodation' (Schmidt 1999, p. 163).

[9] Schmidt takes the United Kingdom as a statist example (1999). Eising regards France and Greece as statist countries (2004, p. 217).

In addition to the major modes of pluralism and corporatism, Schmitter distinguishes one more mode as appropriate for describing and analysing interest politics – syndicalism. 'Syndicalism can be defined as a system of interest intermediation in which the constituent units are an unlimited number of singular, voluntary, non–competitive <…> categories, not hierarchically ordered or functionally specialised, neither recognised, created nor licensed by state or party, nor controlled in their leadership selection or interest articulation by state or party, not exercising a representational monopoly but resolving their conflicts and 'authoratively allocating their values' autonomously, without the interference of the state' (Schmitter 1977, pp. 9–10).

One more model explaining interrelations between the state and interest groups is clientelism. Political clientelism (or patronage[10]) touches virtually all political systems in which votes count for something (Piattoni 2001, pp. 1–30). Clientelism is understood as a cultural phenomenon, where the political space is filled with many informal interpersonal relations. Clientelism is even blamed for the distorted and incomplete development of a given political system. Clientelism is characterised by the trade of votes and other types of partisan support in exchange for public decisions with divisible benefits (ibid.). Separate elements of clientelism or patronage are met in one or another political system, in spite of their democratic development. The political system always includes certain conditions for illegal personal welfare increase and corruption (Lukošaitis 2004, pp. 179–212). Further, one of the branches of interests–state interconnection is consensualism. This mode usually appears in culturally fragmented societies and is based on the assumption that privileges are granted to certain interest groups depending upon their language, religion, nationality, etc. (Lijphart 1977 pp. 1–177).

The above analysed interests–state interrelation approaches can finally be dissolved into more 'complex, pluri–dimensional typologies' (Lehmbruch 1991, p. 135). The most important of these approaches are the policy–network approach, on the one hand, and the economic governance approach, on the other hand. The policy network approach conceptualises policy–making as the outcome of interactions within a set of relatively stable interaction patterns of non–hierarchical, interdependent, but autonomous private and public actors (Héritier 1993). Network of governance approach is considered to be typical of the EU multi–level character. Central to this concept is the assumption that policy–making is largely concerned with problem solving. In addition, political actors have to take into account the specific rationality of social sub–systems. The state is vertically and horizontally segmented and bears the role of 'activator'. That is, the process of governing evolves in loosely coupled inter–organisational networks which facilitate the building of consensus over controversial issues. Thus, in essence, interest groups perform a consultative role, though, for functional reasons, they may also have self–regulatory powers when policy is to be implemented (Eising 2004, p. 238). The economic governance approach emphasises an institutional base of social order, i.e., the relation between politics and state institutions, on the one hand, and the

[10] The terms clientelism and patronage are frequently used interchangeably, however, there are some slight differences; for more ref. Piattoni 2001, pp. 1–30.

economy of modern capitalist societies on the other (Streeck 1994). The policy–network approach and the economic governance approach do not force all cases of state–business interactions to fit into either the pluralist or the corporatist approaches. Instead, they offer generic terms for different modes of state–business interactions which overcome ideal–type confrontations (Van Waarden 1992).

Studies on organised business interest groups in Soviet era and their relations with the state stress that since the political parties in power were obviously not able to handle interest groups, they simply did not wish to let them actively participate in the decision–making process. Scholars argue that the political system development scenarios were constructed exclusively by political parties themselves and interest groups were kept on the periphery and were not granted equal rights of participation in the decision–making processes (Lukošaitis 2004). Hausner (1996) distinguishes several models depicting interrelations between the state and organised interests in post–communist countries:

- Authoritarian corporatism, i.e., continuation of socialist corporatism 'under new conditions'. Authoritarian corporatism indicates that a state's economy and economic interests are monopolised into the hands of particular interest organisations;
- Authoritarian populism: interest representation is strictly controlled and regulated by political authority;
- Class conflict model: classical gap between labour and capital determines social conflicts. The latter are exploited effectively by political parties: established on the grounds of class differentiation, they each take advantage of social conflicts;
- Social corporatism: major interest groups and organisations come together to discuss the major problematic issues concerning a state's economic situation, however, their agreements are built not on social solidarity but on long–term agreements among actors who agree that cooperation is a rational choice in comparison to controversies and objections.

The different approaches of the model of interaction between business interests and the state in the Soviet system differ considerably from that in old democracies. Hough (1977) called the prevailing model institutionalised pluralism, where interest groups can operate and influence public decision–making process only when it is done through state bodies. Although this model resembles the corporatist approach because it is based on the consumption of the state's coordination and interference, it is not characteristic of the pluralistic model.

In the initial transformation period from the Soviet era, the major actors in the arena became political parties. In the consolidated democracy period, interest groups such as labour unions, business organisations and associations appeared (Lukošaitis 2004). According to Skilling and Griffiths (1971), democratic processes in the post–Soviet countries totally differs from their counterparts in Western countries: they called interest groups as political interest groups and defined them as associations of individuals sharing common characteristics, certain approaches towards political issues and raising certain requirements for political bodies. The mentioned groups did not usually have a formal organisational structure and they

established themselves in the lower layers of society. However, better organised groups also functioned, usually among the society elite or inside public institutions (Cox and Vass 2000). Three categories of organised interest groups are identified: (1) institutional interest groups (functioning inside public institutions), e.g., groups of party officials, the bureaucracy; (2) professional interest groups, such as groups of lawyers, industrialists, economists and (3) political dissidents (ibid.).

Moreover, it is of crucial importance to note that the transition to democracy in post–Soviet countries, according to Nielsen, Jessop and Hausner (1995) resulted in a systemic vacuum[11], i.e., a crisis of the system. The systemic vacuum created favourable conditions for the introduction of new methods and institutions (path–shaping approach). However, one should bear in mind that post–Soviet countries are still heavily dependent on the Communist legacy and that the remnants of previous economic and political orders shape the expectations and patterns of conduct (Nielsen, Jessop and Hausner, 1995). Therefore, business interest groups in post–communist countries had to win over the recognition of both the state and society.

The interrelations between business and society are so various that it is quite a task to theoretically enumerate all possible options. This section presented the variations of business interests–state interrelations. It is even more difficult to practically label the states by trying to measure the modes and degrees of access and acceptance. There is no single authorative classification of states regarding those models and, above all, the theoretical definitions themselves provided by different scholars sometimes prove to be a moving target, and the existing research literature often draws different conclusions. The analysis of the above approaches on relations between business interests and the state indicates that different approaches regard the organisation of interest groups, strategies, networks and influence differently however it cannot be denied that each approach clearly shows that organised interest groups cannot be substituted by the state itself. The latter, however, was the prevailing tradition during the Soviet period. Special attention in the section has been given to the links between post–communist countries' organised interest groups and state institutions, providing clear indications that organised interest and state relations in a transitional period will, apparently, evolve into some novel interrelation pattern. The following section explores the interrelation between European integration and possible ways of organising interests.

1.1.3. European Integration and Organisation of Interests

Theorising European integration is a challenging undertaking which has proceeded from various starting points concerning the nature of the phenomenon in question. The following section analyses the theoretical attitudes that explain possible associational reactions of organised business interests to the European integration process and draws various dimensions with descriptive and analytical value.

[11] A systemic vacuum should not be confused with an institutional vacuum, i.e., the complete absence of institutions.

Domestic business interest associations' behaviour can be analysed by applying three major theories of European integration:

- liberal inter–governmentalism, where interest representation activities continue to focus on domestic institutions because national governments are the dominant players in EU policy–making;
- neofunctionalism, where political authority shifts to the European level and makes a strong case for the centralisation of interest group activities at that level; and
- multi–level governance, where political authority is dispersed across and shared between European and national institutions. It follows that interest groups interact with political institutions at both levels.

The emergence of a significant share of multilevel players among the domestic groups serves as evidence in favour of the multilevel governance approach. However, the theories clearly depart in their assessments as to where political authority in the EU resides. This is the reason why they conceive the political behaviour of the organised interests differently.

Liberal intergovernmentalism – rooted in (neo)realism – claims that the EU is best analysed as a regime through which governments coordinate their policies and their economic interdependencies (Moravcsik 1997). Liberal intergovernmentalism is the most prominent representative of state–centric approaches since it assigns the main emphasis of private interest organisations to the national level. According to the proponents of liberal intergovernmentalism, European integration does not challenge the autonomy of the nation–state and this autonomy is preserved or even strengthened. Moravcsik (1991, p. 25) states that even when societal interests are transnational, the principal form of their political expression remains national.

According to intergovernmentalism, the bargaining power of the member states and interstate bargains drives European integration. National governments are supposed to be the key players in EU policy–making. Their preferences are shaped during discussions and negotiations with domestic interest organisations and are not influenced by EU level developments. Domestic interests influence policy through their peak associations (Moravcsik 1998, p. 36). According to intergovernmentalism, interest groups remain largely inactive at the EU level. They represent their interests at a supranational level very rarely, only 'to recover ground lost in national policy domains' (see Figure 2b).

However, Greenwood, Grote and Ronit (1992), Mazey and Richardson (1993a) and Van Schendelen (1994) argue that state–centric approaches fail to recognise that national BIAs by–pass national governments, act and directly represent their interests at supranational institutions and that they also choose to get organised on the European level too so as to integrate their members' interests directly in the process of policy–making at the supranational level.

In contrast to liberal intergovernmentalism, the neo–functionalist approach implies a gradual erosion of the national level as a point of reference due to a shift of decision–making competencies and actors' loyalties from a national to an European level.

According to Haas' (1968, p. 16) classic neo–functional definition, political integration is 'the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new center, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre–existing national states. The end result of a process of political integration is a new political community, superimposed over the pre–existing one'. In this way political activities and values move towards a new center. Domestic interest groups turn to supranational institutions as devices that can more effectively realise demands made at the national level. New alliances with political institutions and interest organisations at the supranational level let their 'erstwhile ties with national friends undergo deterioration' (Haas 1968, p. 313). Hence, national interest groups reorient towards EU institutions, and national systems of interest political behaviour undergo significant change. Some research, however, has proven that the number of public–private interactions at the national level do not decrease and do not lose their significance compared to interactions at the EU level, and that the importance of EU institutions also remained almost the same (Eising 2004) (see Figure 2a). It turned out that the main failure of neo–functionalism was to conceive European integration as an upward process driven by the expansive logic of sectoral integration. Moravcsik (1998) critisises the neo–functionalist approach for being grounded on EU 'high' politics that is of little interest to business groups. It is assumed that 'high' politics, e.g., EU institutional reform, EU future, foreign and security politics is not important for business interest groups. The latter are mostly interested in regulation of the economic sector and resources distribution.

The multi–level governance[12] approach tries to overcome the failure of the neo–functionalists by describing the European polity in terms of two features. Firstly, the European system of collective decision–making is composed of several distinct levels of negotiations and bargaining. Multi–level decision–making causes changes in the relative bargaining power of actors. Decision–making takes place in a differentiated and co–existing arena which is governed by different logics and procedures, that is, a supranational and intergovernmental arena (Grande 1996, Bulmer 1994, Wessels 1997). Secondly, national and supranational institutions are intensely interlocked. Therefore, national and supranational actors and institutions form an integrated system of joint decision–making (see Figure 2c). Within the framework of multi–level governance, the target environment changes significantly. The target structures are extremely fragmented and so is the policy process. Therefore, an element integrated in a multi–level governance approach forms the assumption that European integration induces changes in the institutional structure which, in turn, brings about changes in business interests–state interactions that are different from established patterns at the domestic level (Grande 1996, Hix 2006). Seeking to react effectively to new patterns, business organised interests have to adapt to them; however, according to Kohler–Koch (1997), organised interests have to take into account that each step towards a closer integration in one direction may imply disintegration in another.

[12] Sometimes also refered as multi–governance (Lehmkuhl 1998, Eising 2004, Kohler–Koch 1996, etc.).

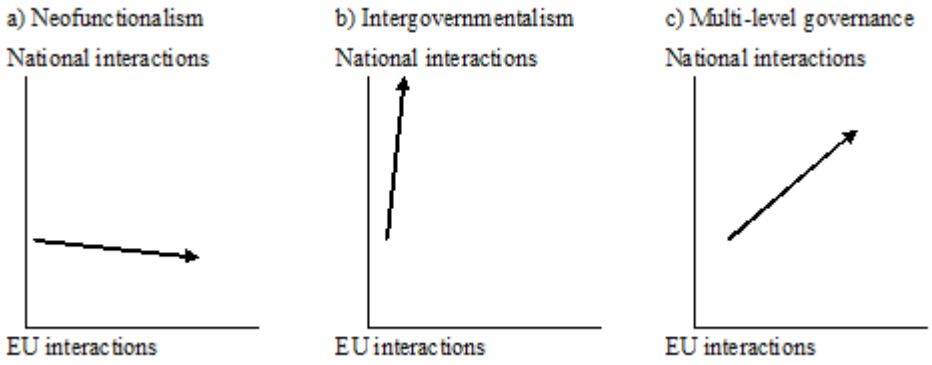


Figure 2 National and EU level interactions among interest groups and the state[13]

According to Kohler–Koch (2000), it is indispensable for interest organisations to have a 'dual strategy' and to be present at both the EU and the national level (even at the regional level) in order to monitor and influence political programmes along the entire policy cycle. As a result, actor constellations at different levels of government can overlap, however, none of the private actors are omnipresent because the multilayered negotiations are interconnected and sequential rather than multilateral (ibid.). Discussions and negotiations take place in different arenas (European Commission committees, European Parliament intergroups, working groups of the Council of the EU, EU institutional working groups), at each level of government, and also across these levels. Even though interest groups at any level are free to represent interests at any number of levels in multi–level governance, it is unlikely that domestic business interest groups will be evenly represented at both the EU and national levels. Business interest groups are tied to their national members and to the national context in which they emerged, they are also embedded in social relations and depend on routine exchanges with established domestic partners from whom they extract resources. 'Hence, it can reasonably be expected that their specific location in the multi–level system shapes their political activities as well as their access to political institutions. Thus, in multi–level governance, most national business interest associations concentrate on domestic institutions, whereas most EU associations focus their political activities on EU institutions' (Eising 2004. p. 217).

The European integration has important consequences for interest groups in general and business interests in particular. The scope and salience of EU decision–making powers attracts a multitude of private actors, and the complex multi–level setting offers many points of access at the European and national levels. The analysed different integration approaches at times foster a competitive environment for organised business interests, however, at times it is very complementary and thus beneficial.

[13] Source: adopted from Eising (2004, p. 214).

1.2. THE NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN UNION POLITICAL SYSTEM

As forms of business interest groups vary so do the ways in which state institutions organise their relationship with business interests. The classical power division model distinguishes three separate power–sharing branches: the executive, the legislative and the judicial. This type of model provides for power fragmentation to a certain extent. Moreover, the architecture of the European Union cannot exactly be said to be shaped according to this model but power fragmentation is strongly felt in the EU system. The EU policy–making process is a dynamic process and demands that actors from different institutions and interest groups cooperate and compete to secure the outcomes they want in the political multi–dimensional system where none of the institutional actors have a monopoly over political decision–making. The following sections analyse the national and EU political system.

1.2.1. National Political System: Institutions and Performance

Dissolution of hierarchical control in post–Soviet countries, including Lithuania, fostered the autonomy of decentralised units in the public sector. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000), Benz and Papadopoulos (2006) identified the move from vertical to cooperative steering in public institutions. These changes resulted in a more intense interaction between the public sector and other actors, including business interest associations. The following section analyses the Lithuanian political system: the judicial and the executive considering the possibilities for interest representation of the business interest associations, and answers the question of whether there is a case of cooperative steering in the Lithuanian political system.

The legislative right in Lithuania belongs to members of Parliament, the President and the Government (Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania 1992). The citizens' initiative grounded on 50 000 signatures also is regulated by the Constitution (ibid.).

The legislative branch in Lithuania is in essence open to the influence of BIAs. The national Parliament consists of 141 members and represents the legislative power in Lithuania. The Parliament discusses and adopts Constitutional amendments, initiates and adopts legal acts, approves the Government's programmes, confirms the state budget, and makes decisions regarding referendums (Statute of Parliament 2009). At the beginning of the legal act adoption procedure, after having taken the decision of further analysis of the legal act project, the Parliament can decide to present the legal act project for consultation with the public (ibid.). For the analysis of legal act projects (and other activities according to the Parliament Statute), the Parliament forms committees. The latter organise public hearings before the formal debates on important issues take place. The committees have a network of social partners and invite them to the hearing on an ad hoc basis (Vilčinskas and Vijeikis 2007). Furthermore, although there is a formal requirement that hearings during which the national position is discussed prior to the meeting of the

Council of the EU should be closed, the Committee of European Affairs does not keep its doors closed to interested parties (ibid.). Short–term issues are discussed and resolved by ad hoc parliamentary commissions. The members of Parliament can join fractions for the implementation of their political goals. The Assembly of Elders debates the Parliament's sessions' work programmes, prepares session agendas and coordinates the work schedule of the committees and fractions. One of the most important committees at the Parliament for the BIAs is the Committee of Economics. Issues such as transport infrastructure, logistics, investments, industry, trade, service sector, public procurements, the establishment of free economic zones, tourism, enterprise establishment, strategy, the assessment of macroeconomic indicators and prognoses of the development of Lithuania's economy, etc. fall within the competencies of this committee. The Committee on the Budget and Finance having the following tasks also falls in the category of important committees: it considers the draft State Budget, exercises general and continuous control of the implementation of the State Budget; it prepares drafts of laws and other legal acts, as well as proposals pertaining to the budget and finance; it prepares and presents conclusions concerning the draft laws which exercise influence on the State Budget's revenue and expenditure; it discusses and presents conclusions as well as proposals pertaining to the draft laws on taxes and special funds, the procedure of financing institutions and organisations maintained from the budget, their expenditure, the standards of the formation of municipal budgets, and budget allocations for the implementation of various programmes.

Traditionally, the domain of the executive power is regarded as the most difficult to approach (Fink–Hafner 1994, Coen and Dannreuther 2003). The best example to prove this statement is the absence of studies on the interrelation between the Government and organised interest groups. However, some authors argue (Vilčinskas and Vijeikis 2007, Maniokas, Vilpišauskas and Žėruolis 2004) that the situation is gradually changing, especially after the Lithuanian Government realised that it lacked expert knowledge on certain issues and had to consult professionals over the anxiety caused by certain politically sensitive issues, e.g., EU funds distribution priorities. The Lithuanian Government assumes the role of the two–level player. On the one hand, the Government is the highest executive power in Lithuania and acts within a wide scope of competencies and public management; on the other hand, it is an important supranational actor actively participating at the Council of the European Union[14]. The Government implements general and special functions. The major general competencies include the coordination and control of ministeries and other bodies of executive power responsible for activities in certain public management areas. The Government executes legal acts, and the governmental programme, and also enjoys the right to prepare and provide legal act drafts to the national Parliament.

While acting according to its competencies, the Government forms commissions and committees that might also become arenas for organised interests. Furthermore, the Government also organises its own sessions. The heads of the ministries and representatives of other institutions subordinate to the Government par-

[14] The Council of the EU itself is discussed in the following section.

ticipate in weekly Government sessions. The representatives of interest groups, non–governmental organisations, etc. receive permission to participate in the Government's sessions from the Prime Minister. Another possibility where representatives of BIAs or other organisations can participate directly is by taking part in the commissions established by the Government. The commissions are established for the fulfilment of special tasks delegated by the Government. Members of the Government and the ministries participate in the commission's work. Only members of the Government's body can participate in the committee (The Law of the Government 1994).

The ministries prepare legal act drafts under authorisation by the Government as part of the implementation of the Government's programme or on their own initiative. The legal acts projects are publicly published online for consultation unless special cases are regulated as being confidential. Any interested parties can submit their opinions on the legal act drafts online or via official letters directed to the ministries or the Government itself. The ministries have the right to build committees and working groups to prepare the drafts of the Government's acts or resolutions and any other documents related to ministries' responsibilities. The ministerial college consists of a minister, vice–ministers, the ministry's state secretary, the ministry's secretaries and the minister's counsellors. The ministerial college is a consultative body for the minister. With the permission of the minister, persons representing other institutions or organisations can participate in the college's sessions. Furthermore, the ministries' chancellors are authorised to ask social partners to submit their positions and opinions on certain legal acts.

A number of institutions are established under the Government and certain functions of the Government or ministries are delegated to these institutions acting under the Government. Some of the institutions under the Government are of significant importance, for example, the Communications Regulatory Authority, the State Institution of Food and Vetenary, the State Institution of Control of Tobacco and Alcohol, the State Commission of Control of Gambling Houses, the Insurance Control Commission, etc. Active contact with the institutions under the Government might ensure successful representation of interests.

The President holds primary powers in foreign policy matters, signs international treaties and submits them to the Parliament for ratification, performs significant functions in domestic policy, holds the right of legislative initiative in the Parliament and also the right to veto the laws passed by the Parliament, etc. (Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania 1992).

The activities of the municipalities are regulated by the Law on Local Self–Governmet (2009). There are sixty municipalities in Lithuania. According to the Law, the independent functions of the municipalities are differentiated and delegated by the State. The independent functions are granted by the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania and other laws, as well as being obligations to the communities. When implementing the independent functions, Lithuanian municipalities enjoy the freedom to initiate decisions, and manage their adoption and enforcement, and are responsible for the fulfilment of independent functions. Considering the interests of the population, some functions are delegated to the municipalities by the

State. When implementing the delegated functions, municipalities have the freedom of adoption of decisions, as prescribed by the laws. The municipalities' activities carried out when implementing the delegated functions are restricted by decisions made by state institutions and officials. In certain cases state functions may be delegated for implementation to municipalities on the basis of contracts. A municipality can uphold such a contract only in the event that the municipality council gives its consent. Usually, such functions are short–term or seasonal. The functions of municipalities can, in accordance with their type, be divided into local government, public administration and public service provision functions.

Some of the major independent functions of municipalities include: the municipal budget; local fees and charges; management of land and other property; learning; general education, vocational training and vocational guidance; informal education; social services; cooperation with non–government organisations; culture; public health care; territory planning; construction works and construction permits; social and economic development; development of tourism, housing, small and medium undertakings; regional development programmes; information society development; environment quality; recreation; heat and drinking water supply; wastewater treatment; waste management; roads and streets; traffic safety; public order; development of business and tourism, among others.

The main functions delegated by the State to municipalities comprise management of registers; civil and fire protection; calculation and payment of compensations; social benefits; property restitution; control of use of the state language; management of archival documents; participation in selecting draftees for military service, mobilisation; participation in organising elections and referendums provided for by law; administration of agricultural production quotas; administration of implementation of rural development measures; primary legal aid guaranteed by the state, etc.

The possibility which can be regarded as the most important, considering society's participation on a municipality level in Lithuania, is the right to participate in municipal elections and directly elect the members of the municipality council. In addition, all citizens and organisations acting on the municipality level enjoy the constitutional right of assembly and expression. The community committees format on the local level is quite a new instrument, however, it has already served a purpose. Community committees usually take place before official municipality council meetings and make decisions regarding the community's position which can be presented to the municipality council. Business interest associations are very important actors between individual enterprises and the municipality. The initiatives taken by the BIAs help the municipality to better understand the needs of businesses, and BIAs themselves have opportunities to exert influence over the decisions taken by the municipalities in the scope of their competencies.

The municipalities, if regarded as the bridge acting as a link to the European level, are not a very effective choice for BIAs because the only link the municipalities have to the European level is the participation in the Committee of the Regions, whose role is mainly consultative. The Lithuanian municipalities are united under the Association of the Municipalities that has its representative in Brussels.

Thus, it would also not be very correct saying that the municipality level is the end of the road for interest representation because the interests expressed by the BIAs could be transferred further, even at the European level.

It is also important to stress that national institutions are responsible for the coordination of politics at the national and European levels. Officers of the Member States are members of expert committees or consultation committees established by the European Commission while the process of preparation of a legal act takes place. Furthermore, civil servants of the Member States at the same stage are involved in COREPER working groups. When the legal act is adopted, the civil servants of the Member States monitor its implementation. The subsidiarity principle, in turn, should ensure that the EU may only act (i.e., make laws) where the action of seperate countries is insufficient while talking about the competencies of the national parliaments and the European Parliament. In fact, civil servants are the major implementers of the EU legal acts at the national level. Each national public administration is entitled to organise the coordination and implementation of EU politics independently. This situation led to the discovery of two phenomena: institutional fusion and europeanisation.

To conclude this section it is important to emphasise that even if cooperative steering is being transferred to patterns of governance, the national institutional framework of the state provides the legitimised institutions and processes for the final decisions. Therefore, the interface between governance and established institutions is not always of mutual support. It is often difficult to transfer decisions from structures of cooperative governance to institutions that are in fact responsible for formal decision–making. The parallel between governance and government gives way to a conflict between different logics of action and accentuates the issues of transparency and accountability. Social scientists identify similar problems at the European and international levels, although in a different manner. What is quite surprising in many cases it is Members of the Parliament who invite the BIAs, not *vice versa* (Vilčinskas and Vijeikis 2007). The latter finding indicates a relative weakness of BIAs themselves. Alternative paths of access via lobbyists does not remedy the current situation either because only 23 lobbyists are registered according to the Law at the Lobbyists' Registrar and also according to the declarations of lobbying activities of 2008, where 14 registered lobbyists out of 20 did not perform any lobbying activity (Report on Lobbying activities 2008).

A strong interest representation tradition and culture which could ensure that the interested social partners – business interest groups – are included in regular participation at consultations considering legal act projects does not exist. Frequently, the decision to invite a social partner to participate in consultation rests upon a single person that in many cases might create transperancy problems and issues depending upon the political party in power. The ensured continuity of transparent general rules open to all stakeholders could remedy the current situation.

1.2.2. European Union Political System: Institutions and Performance

As it was already mentioned, the EU shares most of its powers with the member states. Consequently, policy–making implies an interplay between the national and European institutions in multi–level governance, though it is widely agreed that European institutions cannot be compared to national institutions. Mazey and Richardson (1993) emphasise additional access points provided to business interest groups by the European Union, while at the same time acknowledging a strengthening of the directive style of the national governments. In fact, Héritier (1993), Benz and Papadopoulus (2006) reason that the differentiated structures are advantageous for the input of interests as they provide opportunities for participation because they integrate actors across various institutions into the effective core of the political system. Therefore, the process of policy–making opens up a plurality of interests. Regarding the political issues at stake, it is assumed that 'high' politics, e.g., EU institutional reform, the future of the EU, and foreign and security politics is not important for interest groups. The latter are mostly interested in regulation of the economic sector and resources distribution. The following section analyses the major EU institutions regarding participation of interest groups in the political decision–making procedure.

It is argued that the Treaty on the establishment of the European Economic Community in 1957, the Single European Act in 1986 and the Treaty of the European Act in 1992 and the launch of the Single Market Programme in 1985 significantly increased the awareness of the importance of the European level in the minds of private actors. Simply relying on the national level has become insufficient. Aspinwall and Greenwood (1998) and Greenwood (1997, 2002) illustrate clearly the proliferation of specialised BIAs and the increasing growth of interest representation in Brussels. Obviously, one cannot equate the increase in the growth of interest representation with a stronger influence on decision–making on the European level.

The European Commission (EC) is considered the most supranational institution in the EU decision–making process (Bennett 1999). It is geared towards promoting common European interests, as well as promoting its own position. Therefore, in the context of interest groups, the Commission needs information about Europe–wide interests. The European Commission is the executive of the European Union. The body is responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the Union's treaties and the general day–to–day running of the Union. The Commission operates as a cabinet government, with 27 Commissioners. There is one Commissioner per Member State, though Commissioners are bound to represent the interests of the EU as a whole rather than their home state. Thus, the Commission plays a central role in the EU legislative process (Bellier 1997). It has the right to initiate legislation and is thus responsible for the drafting of legislative proposals. Spence (1997) argues that due to understaffing and certain budgetary constraints, the Commission depends on external information resources to obtain necessary expertise.

The EC starts the process of initiating the legal act by intense consultations of the responsible Directorate General with representatives of national and regional governments, public administrations and certainly interest groups and associations. In order to be able to set an agenda for the EU, the European Commission is compelled to establish good cooperation with experts from these organisations. Consequently, many of the committees and networks are established and designed to support the preparation of policy initiatives. In rare cases, usually, on ad hoc bases, the Commission might need information about domestic interests, especially, when it has to achieve a compromise in the Council of the European Union (CoEU) and the European Parliament (EP).

Moreover, it is important to note that the European Commission has developed a consultative discourse with the following documents: Communication from the Commission on promoting the role of voluntary organisations and foundations in Europe (1997), European Governance. A White Paper (2001), Communication from the Commission Towards a reinforced culture of consultation and dialogue – General principles and minimum standards for consultation of interested parties by the Commission (2002), the discussion paper 'The Commission and NGOs: building a stronger partnership' (2000). The package of the above documents ensures the participation on various interest organisations in the process of political decision–making.

The European Parliament's role has increased from having, initially, no real role whatsoever to play, to having a consultative role and, ultimately, to having powers that are much more than consultative especially after the Lisbon Treaty. These powers have reached the level of co–decision with the Council of the European Union. It is the Parliament's task to make amendments to the proposed legislation and to take decisions. The European Parliament is the only directly elected parliamentary institution of the European Union. Together with the Council of the European Union, it forms the bicameral legislative branch of the EU. The Parliament and the Council of the EU form the highest legislative body within the European Union. The Parliament is composed of 736[15] Members of the European Parliament.

Although the European Parliament has legislative power that bodies such as those mentioned above do not possess, it does not have legislative initiative, as most national EU parliaments do. The European Parliament shares equal legislative and budgetary powers with the Council of the EU (except for a few areas where special legislative procedures apply). It also has equal control over the EU budget. Finally, the European Commission, the executive body of the EU, is accountable to the Parliament: in particular, the Parliament can veto the Commission and its President and can force the body to resign.

The Lisbon Treaty came into force on 1 December 2009, granting the Parliament powers over the entire EU budget, making the Parliament's legislative powers equal to the Council's in nearly all areas and linking the appointment of the Commission President to the Parliament's own elections. Now the EP has many signifi-

[15] Now is number of MEPs equals to 736, according to the Lisbon Treaty – 751. For transition period – (till next EP elections) 754.

cant formal and informal roles in the EU decision–making process, from joint budgetary authority to appointment and dismissal of the Commission. The major factor to examine in this context is co–decision procedures. The co–decision process was established at Maastricht, and later refined at Amsterdam. The co–decision process roughly makes the EP equal to the Council as legislator in formal terms. In its original variant, co–decision gave both the EP and the Council two readings of the proposal, and provided for a process known as conciliation if the two institutions could not agree on the content of a certain piece of legislation. As revised in the Amsterdam Treaty, the co–decision procedure is a streamlined process with its major focus still on conciliation but with the ability of the Council to impose its common position (as it was in the Maastricht Treaty) removed. Therefore, in case conciliation fails, there is no legislation, and both institutions are under greater pressure to reach an agreement. The Amsterdam Treaty also enabled this agreement to be made after both institutions have had their first reading of the proposal. In case the EP and the CoEU can agree on this stage, there is no need to undertake the second reading or conciliation. This substantially facilitates the development of a joint legislative culture between the EP and the CoEU. Additionally, the Amsterdam Treaty applied co–decision to a far wider range of policy areas.

Although co–decision has been subject to many various interpretations, there is now general consensus in the academic literature that it has significantly increased the powers of the EP, and created a new kind of relationship between the EP and the Council (Warleigh 2003). The Lisbon Treaty has extended co–decision to nearly all areas (such as agriculture, fisheries, transport, structural funds, the entire budget and the former third pillar). Regarding the Parliament's role in the legislation process, its demand for expert knowledge is limited. At this stage of the legislative process, the Commission has already drafted a detailed and often technical proposal. Though some ground expert knowledge is indispensable, the amount of technical market expertise needed to change and make decisions is much lower in the Parliament. As a directly elected body, it is the Parliament's task to evaluate the legislative proposals from a European perspective (Kohler–Koch 1994, 1997, 2005). The European Parliament requires information about Europe–wide interests to complete its functions.

The EP is likely to be more amenable to national pressures than the EC, therefore, the EP's influence varies according to the issue at hand and the decision–making procedure that applies. In addition, technically speaking, members of the EP commute between Strasbourg and Brussels and their electoral districts. Eising (2005) argues that for business associations (and other interest groups) it is pretty difficult to access the relevant actors. Moreover, EP parliamentary majorities are more unstable than those in the parliamentary democracies of the Member State because the importance of territorial, institutional, party–political, and issue–specific decision criteria varies to a greater extent within the EP. Generally, the heads of the Standing Committees and the rapporteurs who are responsible for certain policy dossiers are the most important addressees for business associations' demands.

In stark contrast to the EC, the CoEU is the most intergovernmental institution in EU legislative procedures. The influence of national interests prevails in the Council and it is therefore crucial for the Member States to identify their national or domestic interest. Member States retain a very strong demand for information about domestic interests. Bouwen (2002b) argues that the Council also needs information about Europe–wide interests due to the balance it keeps between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism. A collective purpose and collective commitment gives intergovernmental institutions a supranational flavour.

Owing to its pivotal position, the Council of the European Union would seem to be a highly relevant contact for interest groups. However, the CoEU and its administrative mechanism, the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) and the Council's Working Groups are rarely addressed by interest groups in Brussels (Eising 2005). Rather, domestic business associations and other interest groups tend to address their concerns to particular national government departments representing their specific interests at a national level. While the Council's policy positions evolve along national lines, in part as a consequence of pressure by domestic interests (Moravcsik 1998), the European Council is freer from interest groups pressure. Not only does it comprise of the heads of states and governments, thus representing general interests to a greater degree, but it also meets formally only once every six months, lessening its impact on the daily politics in the EU.

Generally, business interest organisations have more frequent interactions at the working level of the EC and the CoEU than with the EC or the CoEU political leadership. The desk officers in the Commision, the Council's working groups and parliamentary committees are responsible for drafting policy proposals and sorting out their details. At this point, they depend greatly on information and support that can be provided by interest groups and interest associations. On the other hand, attention to Commissioners and the Ministers is not directed to policy details but focuses on those aspects of an EU directive that are contested or that are considered to be particularly important. Representing interests to these bodies usually implies that either broad policy agendas are established, or that decisions that were made earlier in the policy process are revised. Hence, frequent access to the political leadership of the EU does not imply that these contacts are less important for interest groups than are interventions at the working level.

The European Court of Justice (ECJ), as the judiciary body of the EU, monitors compliance with and interprets EU law which takes precedence over national law. The preliminary ruling procedure that offers a channel for national courts to refer questions of European law to the ECJ allows interest associations to challenge the compatibility of domestic and EU law. However, in practice, to take a case to the ECJ usually demands that a body of EU law already exists. Even where there is a case that can be made, the outcome of such an action is uncertain, the financial costs are heavy, and the duration of the case is generally lengthy. These factors mean that the ECJ is not available for all interest groups unless it is felt that the stakes will be very high. The research does not analyse the ECJ in the interest representation context because of the above mentioned reasons.

The Economic and Social Committee is not given much attention either, as it is of marginal importance to business interest associations because of its recommendational powers. Although it is worth mentioning that the Economic and Social Committee initiates many debates for position gathering. Some of the initiatives of the Economic and Social Committee are as follows: Opinion on 'The Role and Contribution of Civil Society Organisations in the Building of Europe' (1999), Opinion on 'The 2000 Intergovernmental Conference – The Role of the European Economic and Social Committee' (2000) and Opinion on 'Organised Civil Society and European governance: the Committee's Contribution for the White Paper' (2001). The Committee of the Regions, just like the Economic and Social Committee, is regarded to be of marginal importance to business interest associations because of its recommendational powers. The Committee of the Regions is an assembly of local and regional representatives that provides sub–national authorities with a direct voice within the EU's institutional framework.

Unfortunately, many of the studies ignore the fact that European integration does not only catalyse the emergence and development of BIAs at a European level, but that it also affects BIAs at the national level. Van Waarden (1994) argues that it is at the national level that the large majority of the organised action of business–state interrelations is located. One could expect that the changes brought by the European integration processes leave their most visible marks at the national level. Schmitter and Streeck (1981) argue that BIAs should maintain strong national bases especially in cases where the focus is not so much on decision–making but on non–decision making. Most organised actions and sectoral forms of public–private cooperation are embedded on the national level and recent studies have suggested that national arrangements for bringing attention to disputes are successful if BIAs and other interest groups manage to shift the functional content from demand to supply issues. In addition, in their attempt to meet the increasing obligations to the EU, national governments have to rely more and more on the negotiated consent of their respective social partners in order to obtain the 'voluntary and active assent' that is so important for competitive success. Thus, to act on two levels while still managing to honour old loyalties is of crucial importance to BIAs if they want to survive within such territorially and functionally shifted boundaries.

To conclude, in the EU, institutions with autonomous political powers have been set up at the upper level: the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the European Court of Justice. Lower level units have very strong participatory and decision–making rights. The member states of the EU are represented in the Council of the EU and in the European Council. The Council of the EU shares executive functions with the European Commission and legislative functions with the European Parliament. Judicial functions have been allocated to the European Court of Justice as well as to national courts. For the most part, subnational regions and societal interests have only been granted formal consultative status such as in the Committee of the Regions and in the Economic and Social Committee.

1.3. VARIETY OF EVALUATION MODELS OF BUSINESS INTEREST ASSOCIATIONS' BEHAVIOUR

Business interest associations acting in the multilevel political system and being complex phenomenon can be investigated in several perspectives. On the one hand they could be explored as organisations, on the other hand, they could be analysed as a whole in the context of their appearance, functioning, behaviour, strategies application, etc. Meanwhile the behaviour of the organised business interests can be influenced by a number of factors, such as legal framework, dominating political party, state institutions set–up or culture and traditions, different evaluation models focusing on different aspects and different elements of BIAs occur in scholarly literature. It should be noted that the boundaries of the models are frequently diffuse because models share certain similar characteristics. The following sections of the doctoral thesis discuss different models for evaluation of behaviour of organised business interests found in the existing scientific literature and highlight their major features. The following basic models – democracy legitimacy model, access approach and europeanisation perspective – have been chosen due to their relatively wide application in the scholarly literature.

1.3.1. Democratic Legitimacy, Access Goods and Business Interest Associations

In the widest sense all organised business interests hold the capacity to contribute to the democratic legitimacy through participation in the policy–making processes and solve the problem of democracy deficit (Marquand 1979, Bouwen 2003, Greenwood 2003). Democratic legitimacy has become an important issue for the European institutions since the Single European Act and the Treaty of the European Union because the treaties led to significant changes as the result of which a number of political decisions have been transferred from the national to the European level. Some scholars argue that new European institutional infrastructure weaken democratic legitimacy at the national level and fail to compensate for that by establishing institutions at the European level (Christiansen 1997, Bellamy and Castiglione 2000). Marquand (1979) originally coined the term 'democratic deficit' in an analysis of the functioning of the European Community institutions underlining the weakness of their democratic components. Democratic deficit mainly deal with the issues of the lack of territorial representation and functional representation[16] (Bouwen 2003).

As it was earlier stated state institutions and business interest associations are interlinked. Democratic legitimacy can be evaluated by democratic legitimacy and business interests' access model started by Wilson (1973) and further developed by

[16] The European Parliament is the example location of territorial representation and the Economic and Social Affairs Committee and the European Commission, etc. are examples of functional representation.

Buholzer (1998), Schmitter and Streeck (1999), Bouwen (2002, 2002a). The mentioned model evaluates two dimensions in this context:

- the access of different forms of organised business interests to state institutions and
- the link between degree of contribution upon democratic legitimacy and different organisational forms of business interests.

Four major organizational forms of business interest representation are distinguished within the model. They are national BIAs, European BIAs, separate national or European companies and professional national or Brussels consultants. Neither the state institutions nor mentioned organised business interests have the ability to pursue their political goals autonomously. Organised interests cannot have access to state institutions without having certain 'access goods', on the one hand. On the other hand, state institutions need external advice on legal acts they adopt and policies they implement (ibid.).

Firstly, the model Bouwen (2003) developed the model based on the analysis of the BIAs considering the demand and supply of access goods. Bouwen applied access approach to evaluate access (contacts) of different types of actors at the European level. The model is considered as one of the branches of the European Union integration theories, however, can easily assume autonomy if put at the national level in the context of a single Member State. Organised interests seek political access to receive information about the formulation and implementation of policies and exert influence on them. They seek direct access to policy makers rather than rely on mass mobilization and media campaigns to promote their political causes (Wilson 1973). Contacts between state institutions and organised interests increase the policy knowledge of the actors, they can help establish shared policy goals and norms, and they can enhance the understanding of each other's position. However, the contacts do not mean that afterall the course of events will change. Shortly, access is not equal to influence and may not have an impact on certain policies. Though those BIAs that have frequent contacts with policy–makers have better chances to influence (Bouwen 2003). They are not only experts in choosing the right contact person and providing the right kind of information but they are well informed about policy developments. The second step is evaluate democratic legitimacy and how different forms of organised business interests contribute to it.

As an important 'currency' for interactions between state institutions and actors the information and knowledge are regarded as crucially important access goods. Buholzer (1998) and Bouwen (2003) specify three different kinds of information that determines the BIA's ability to access state institution:

1. Expert knowledge (EK) – expertise and technical know–how;
2. Information about the European encompassing interest (IEEI) – information concentrated by European associations;
3. Information about domestic encompassing interest (IDEI) – information concentrated by domestic associations.

To cite an example, though European Commission has a lot technical know–how at its disposal, however, it is too distant from the market and is not that well

informed, therefore it needs the EK. European and domestic encompassing interests take beginning in as 'important exchange good' too. An interest is more encompassing when more interested parties are involved in the formulation of the interest. The involved parties can be both individual companies and associations. According to Schmitter and Streeck (1999, p. 58), two indicators determine 'encompassingness'. Firstly, the demarcation of the interest group's organizational domain (variety of interests), secondly, geographical representativity of the interest group. According to Bouwen (2002a, 2003), different organizational forms of business interest representation enable the provision of different access goods.

Large companies controlling financial resources are directly active in the market and, therefore, particularly good at providing know–how expert information, however their capacity to provide information about encompassing interests is rather limited because each separately they represent single domestic company. Both European and national BIAs on their turn are not that good at providing expert information because of their multi–layered organizational structure they are too distant from the market reality. However, they are good at consensus building listening to different opinions of their member companies, therefore, they are good at providing information on encompassing European or domestic interests.

Moreover, professional consultants have very limited capacities to provide encompassing interests information because they do not represent their own interests. They can provide expert knowledge in the area in which they specialize. Bouwen (2003) shows that different organizational forms of business interest representation provide different access goods that ensure access to institutions.

While engaging in the part on democratic legitimacy it is important to make distinction between 'input legitimacy' and 'output legitimacy' (Scharpf 1999, p. 6). Input legitimacy concerns democratic decision–making at the European level. Input legitimacy means involving citizens and interest groups as much as possible in the decision–making and monitoring processes. Output legitimacy, on its turn, concerns the general effectiveness of the European Union in dealing with problems and generating policy results (outputs). Improved policy outputs lead to increased social acceptance and, consequently, increased legitimacy of the policy–making process.

Furthermore, the model bridges the gap between having specific access goods, on the one hand, and input and output legitimacy, on the other hand. Table 1 depicts business interests' capacity to provide certain access good and consequential ability to contribute to input or output legitimacy of the EU institutions.

It is seen that input legitimacy is directly related to the both information about the European encompassing interest and information about the domestic encompassing interest provided by the European BIAs and national BIAs respectively. These access goods provide input legitimacy because they are the source of information about representative interest. On the other hand, output legitimacy is tightly linked to expert knowledge as access good. Expert knowledge provides the EU institutions expertise to deal with the occurring problems efficiently. Thus, it increases the EU's operation capacity and effectiveness and, consequently, increases the EU's institutions output legitimacy. Information about the European and na-

tional encompassing interest as an access good also contributes to implementation of the EU legislation and to effective generation of policy outputs. It is because in order to provide encompassing interest an interest group should encompass different interests and aggregate more separate interests thereby enhancing these groups' potential contribution to the implementation of the EU's legislation (Bouwen 2003).

Table 1 Relationship between organisation and access good[17]

Organisation	Access good	Legitimacy
Individual firm	Expert knowledge	Output legitimacy
European association	Information about the European encompassing interest	Input/output legitimacy
National association	Information about the domestic encompassing interest	Input/output legitimacy
Consultant	Expert knowledge	Output legitimacy

As it is has been stated the interrelation between interest groups and state institutions is rooted in access goods dependencies among them. The model of democratic legitimacy and access deals with multicomplex democratcy perspective, includes different forms of organised business interests and helps to evaluate how different forms of organised business interests enjoy different access possibilities to the state institutions and their potential to contribute to the democratic legitimacy of the state institutions at the European or national level. However, this model in its full scale could be mainly applied at the European level because at the national level the actors' access goods are reduced to the major two types: information about the domestic encompassing interest and expert knowledge.

1.3.2. Europeanisation, Influence Routes and Business Interest Associations

The concept of Europeanisation has been coined to evaluate the impact of the EU integration on member states domestic environments. Bulmer and Radaelli (2005, p.341) and Fairbrass (2004) define the Europeanisation by incorporating both its mechanisms and effects as a process consisting of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedure, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public policies. Knill and Lehmkuhl (1999) identify two effects of Europeanisation on the domestic setting: the alteration of domestic opportunity structures with certain domestic actors benefiting over others; and the alteration of beliefs and expectations of domestic actors leading to changes in cognition and preference formation.

[17] Source: adopted from Bouwen 2003, p. 10.

The European integration has profound effects on political behaviour of business interest associations and existing interrelation between business and state (Kohler–Koch 1997, Coen 1997, Schmidt 1999, Wilts 2001). The existing literature analyses in big quantities the impact of the European integration on interest representation in general. Scholars agree that there has been an impact of the European integration upon political behaviour of the organised business interests, however, how much of the observed can be attributed to the general globalisation trends faced by all states and how much of the change was specific to supranational nature of the EU needs to further be explored (Wilts 2001). Besides, despite, the Europeanisation process, national business interests associational landscapes are equipped with a certain robustness against mentioned influence and national specificities regarding self–regulation persist and maintain regulatory diversity of BIAs landscapes across the EU (Van Waarden 1994, p. 257).

Europeanisation is tightly related to the European integration theories because the latter explain possible associational reactions of the organised business interests to the process of the European integration. The previous section listed three major theories of the European integration: liberal intergovernmentalism, neofunctionalism and multi–level governance. It follows that national business interests' associations might interact with political institutions at both levels and have a number of so–called 'routes' or channels of influence (Greenwood 2003).

On the one hand, 'national route' refers to the use of national contacts and national government to exert the influence upon the EU decision–making, whereas the 'European route' or 'Brussels strategy' involves attempts to make influence upon the European institutions themselves (ibid.). National route folowers domestic interests influence national policy through their peak associations (Moravcsik 1998) and remain mainly inactive at the EU level and approach supranational level very rarely. However, the opponents argue that state–centric approaches fail to recognise that national BIAs by–pass national governments and seek to directly represent their interests at the European institutions and include their members interests directly in the process of policy–making at the supranational level.

On the other hand 'Brussels route' implies a gradual weakening of the national level as a target point by organised interests due to a change of decision–making competencies from the national to the European level. Thus, national interest groups redirect themselves towards EU institutions, and national systems of interest political behaviour undergo change.

However, the national and Brussels influence routes are not mutually exclusive. The debate on where is the balance between the two influence channels is going on. Lindberg (1963) proposed the initial pattern by stating that the interests seeking the European integration go for Brussels strategy and those with defensive postures utilise national routes. However, the reality has proved to be more complicated. The attempts to identify which exact route of influence is applied need to clearly define what constitutes interest representation and the various hidden forms some of them are taken, isolating the real behaviour from the thinking on certain behaviour. The evaluation of national business interest association according to in-

fluence routes' model needs certain set of methods in other case any judgment can only be impressionistic (Greenwood 2003).

Furthermore, the term 'route' or 'channel' causes some problematic issues because Members States and the EU institutions not only are addressed by the organised interest groups but also participate themselves and represent their interests, i. e. members states and the EU institutions are both objects and subjects of the process of interest representation. Above all, various combinations of influence routes are possible depending upon the variety of circumstances, such as the nature of the issue concerned, the type of interest affected and prevailing circumstances.

The extent of changes in competences brought by the Treaties of the European Union affected modes of decision–making and consequently made influence upon the behaviour of organised interests. For example, the balance of the views expressed prior the Single European Act tended towards the national channel (Averyt 1977). The Treaties either brought new set of political actors or intensified the interests of other.

The route existing in between the national and Brussels channels and corresponding to the multilevel governance approach implies the emergence of a significant share of multilevel players among the domestic groups. This is the middle influence route indicating that the national and the European institutions are interlinked and, therefore, national and supranational actors and institutions have to form integrated system of joint decision–making and aiming at effective interest representation they have to be flexible, adapt to new patterns and often have 'dual startegy' (Kohler–Koch 2000).

The Europeanisation process has important impact for national characteristics of national political systems, their structures of power, decision–making and political behaviour of the organised business interest groups. The dominating forces in the decision–making process are primarily intergovernmental or supranational and together with decision–making rules and procedures determine interest representation and contribution to policy making, *i. e.* political behaviour of organised business interests. The Europeanisation model evolving from the above creates an interesting and challenging area for researchers to evaluate business interest associations in this context.

1.4. CONCLUSIONS

Firstly, this part outlines the major definitions. It was identified that scholarly literature provides numerous definitions of interest groups and several, however, comprehensive concepts of business interest associations and their functions starting with interest representation and ending even with some illegal activity.

Furthermore, there is an analysis of the variations of business–state interrelations models. As there is no single authorative classification of states regarding those models and, above all, the theoretical definitions themselves provided by different scholars sometimes prove to be a moving target, the existing research literature often draws different conclusions. Special attention in this section has been

given to the features linking organised business interest groups and state institutions in post–communist countries, providing clear indications that organised business interest and state relations in the transitional period will, apparently, evolve into some novel interrelation pattern. The section also explores the interrelation between European integration and possible ways of organising business interests.

The basic foundation of the EU multi–level political system is built by the citizens of the 27 Member States. Citizens have two alternative channels through which they can direct their requirements to the state authorities. Firstly, they can participate in public elections and elect national parliaments which form and supervise national governments whose heads (or heads of the states) are members of the European Council. The members of the national governments are also members of the Council of the EU. In European elections, citizens elect the European Parliament which is the only directly elected parliamentary institution in the European Union.

Secondly, citizens can form political parties or join interest groups and participate in the political decision–making process. Political parties and interest groups, thus, become major intermediary bodies between society and the state authority on national and European levels. Political parties as such are not be further included in the thesis.

Associated business groups form business interest associations that intermediate and represent the interests of their members: entrepreneurs, companies or low–order associations. National business interest associations try to access and exert influence upon the national authority: Government, Parliament and municipalities or European authority, such as the European Commission, European Parliament, and the Council of the EU. In addition, BIAs can support political parties in order to ensure their interests are represented in national or European politics or intermediate their interests through litigation processes at a national or European level.

It is important to emphasise that on December 1, 2009, the Treaty of Lisbon came into force. The Treaty of Lisbon amends the current European Union and European Communities treaties. This new especially important development in EU politics brings essential changes that are also important in the context of multilevel governance and interest intermediation. The Lisbon Treaty strengthens the role of the European Parliament and national parliaments which might later be indicated in the increased interest in them by organised interests groups and gives more opportunities for citizens to have their voices heard by the Citizens' Initiative, i.e., one million citizens from a number of Member States have the possibility to call on the European Commission to bring forward new policy proposals.

Furthermore, the way the BIAs perform at the national level is 'path dependent' (Pierson 1996). This holds true in two dimensions. On the one hand, Metcalfe (1994), Siedentopf and Ziller (1988) argue that there is strong evidence that even when there are legal European provisions, implementation occurs with significant variations at the national level. On the other hand, BIAs' landscape within the Member State also contains certain robustness against influence. Van Waarden (1994, p. 257) debates that while European integration may induce some regulatory

convergence, national specificities regarding self–regulation do persist and maintain regulatory diversity across Europe.

Business interest associations acting in the multilevel political system and being complex phenomenon can be investigated in several perspectives. On the one hand they could be explored as organisations, on the other hand, they could be analysed as a whole in the context of their appearance, functioning, performance, strategies application, etc. The following basic models – democracy legitimacy model, access approach and europeanisation perspective are discussed in this part of the doctoral thesis.

Though the EU policy processes are not open to the participation of all interests at all stages, organised interest groups have considerable impact due to the multi–level character of the whole system which allows for the exertion of influence before any proposals are put on the table and introduced as part of the formal procedures. Furthermore, the structure–inducive selectivity of the EU is quite low in comparison to that of the national state due to the fact that interest aggregation takes place at different locations and at different times.

PART 2 BUILDING THE METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE THESIS

During the last decades much attention has been focused on organised interests and interest intermediation from different perspectives. Despite the growing scholarly input in the field, there is still a lack of solid studies focusing on organized domestic business interests. Whereas the previous chapters suggested a theoretical framework to analyse the patterns of behaviour of business interest associations, this part develops an analytical framework to guide the empirical investigation, describes a methodological approach, and discusses the methods and research design that have been constructed in order to evaluate thesis defensive statements.

2.1. RESEARCH STRATEGY AND FRAMEWORK

Research logic is a complex and multi–faceted process. Deductive theorising on the basis of ideas from business interests and state interrelation theories, business interest association behaviour models and theories of the EU integration have laid the foundations for the method framework. Since previous chapter developed the body of theoretical knowledge based on the different theoretical approaches, the following chapters seek to implement the tasks of translating theoretical concepts into empirically manageable indicators and proceeding with valid data collection, in order to explain the established methodological foundation for the whole research.

The research agenda of this certain thesis includes six major stages[18]: (1) planning and preparation for research; (2) building the theory; (3) translation of theoretical concepts into manageable and measurable indicators; (4) data collection; (5) theoretical/statistical data interpretation, and finally (6) making conclusions and debating suggestions for further research. For a complete scheme of the research logics of this thesis, see Figure 3.

In the attempt to develop an understanding of Lithuanian BIAs' behaviour, this thesis required a new survey of the Lithuanian BIAs to be carried out, as no comprehensive data existed that was suitable for analysis or comparison across the territorial, hierarchical, operational, etc. domains or on a national or European level.
The research was initiated by initial analysis of the existing knowledge about Lithuanian BIAs and by formulating initial concepts. The main idea from the very start of the research was to aim for a better understanding of the behaviour patterns of Lithuanian BIAs. The initial analysis of the existing scholarly literature helped to come up with the understanding of the research problem, formulation of the research objective and explicit research goals. At the later research stage the thesis has been supplemented with the defensive statements.

[18] There are four classical research agenda stages: initial planning, empirical research, research data processing and data interpretation (Kardelis 2002, Nachmias and Nachmias 1996).

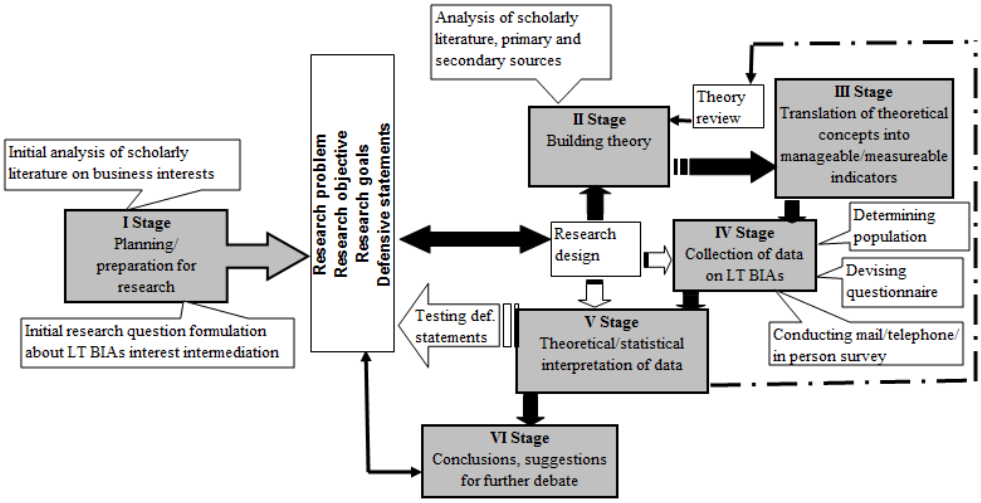


Figure 3 Scheme of research logics[19]

2.2. EVALUATION MODEL FOR BUSINESS INTEREST ASSOCIATIONS' BEHAVIOUR

The functioning of BIAs is a complex process and can be characterised by a variety of factors. One important legacy of the debate on BIAs is their identification as part of an intermediate stage between society and state. As such, BIAs are characterised by the fact that they have members and are members at the same time. According to Müller–Jentsch (1982), Streeck and Schmitter (1991) and Traxler (1986), with these properties, BIAs operate as intermediaries between two sets of actors: their members on the one hand, and their interlocutors on the other hand. This complex existence and behaviour of the Lithuanian BIAs, which is at the core of the dependent variable of the research, is evaluated by the model constructed and presented in the thesis. The proposed model of the Lithuanian business interest associations' behaviour has been based on the the analysed scientific literature, the theory of interrelation between interests and the state, and the models of logic of membership (LoM) and logic of influence (LoI).

The LoM and the LoI (see Figure 4), when compared to the terminology used in the social research, seem to overlap with the concepts used by Loveridge, Child and Warner (1973, pp. 71–91), namely, 'administrative rationality' and 'representative rationality'. Administrative rationality can be called the predecessor of LoI and 'relates to the way that specified tasks or outcomes are attained with certainty and involves such properties as routinisation of operation, specialisation of functions, directness of communication and speed in decision–making'. However,

[19] Source: adapted from King, Keohane and Verba 1994, Kardelis 2002, Luobikienė 2003, Merkys 2008.

Schmitter and Streeck (1999, p. 19) argue that administrative rationality does not identify whether these are applied to the BIA's relationship with its members or with the state. Representative rationality on its own corresponds more to the LoM because Loveridge, Child and Warner (ibid.) presumed that 'flexibility of operations (sufficient) to suit the needs of different membership groups, a duplication of functions in order to build checks and balances into union control, a multiplicity of communications in order to allow the maximum possible interchange and collation of opinion, and a holding back of decision–making until every viewpoint has been expressed' can only be attained through 'widespread membership involvement'. Studying BIAs, one has to take into account the properties of both environments. The following sections provide a comprehensive illustration of models of LoM and LoI and their integration into the proposed model of the current research.

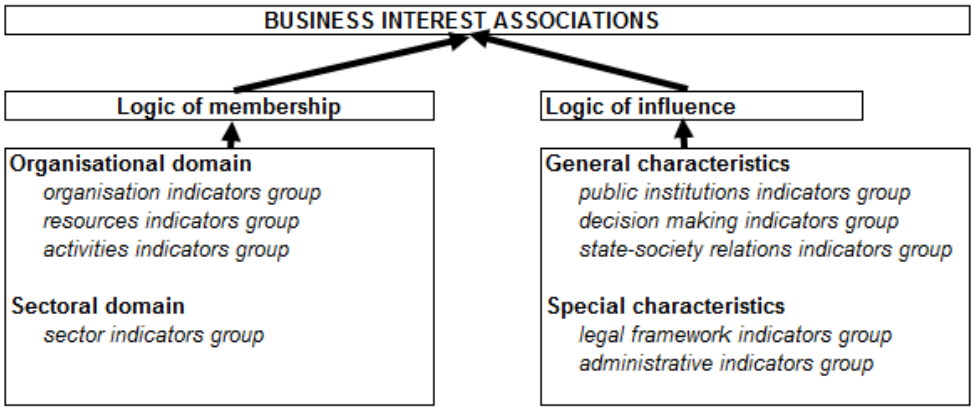


Figure 4 Models of logic of membership and logic of influence[20]

2.2.1. Characteristics of the Logic of Membership

The essence of the logic of membership model lies in that a BIA has to organise itself and act so as to create a certain environment and offer sufficient incentives to its present members and potential members to extract resources from them and to ensure the survival and growth of the BIA. Moreover, from the point of view of the members, BIAs are legitimate when they manage to aggregate relevant objectives and the needs of their members and transform them into operational policy objectives. BIAs are effective when they establish mechanisms which permit the objectives of BIAs to find their way into the decision making process.
The LoM model includes several principal elements: the organisational domain and the sectoral domain. Each domain comprises of indicator groups. The latter are specified in line with the existing theoretical and empirical knowledge.

[20] Source: adapted from Schmitter and Streeck (1999, pp. 16–34).

2.2.1.1. Organisational Complexity for Enhanced Business Interest Association's Behaviour

The extent to which separate business units pursue their interests through political action rather than relying solely on their power to invest can be determined by looking at the organisational structure of their associations.

The notion of an organisation domain refers to intra–organisational structures and distinguishes between horizontal differentiation and hierarchical integration. The horizontal dimension describes the degree to which intra–organisational structures reflect functional differentiation and specialisation, such as interest differentiation, for example, by territory or product, task differentiation, for instance, the number of specialised committees within a BIA, and task orientation, that is, the percentage of staff allocated to a certain sub–unit (Schmitter and Streeck 1981, p. 169). The vertical dimension serves as a mechanism of coordinating or integrating separate units (ibid. p. 166). Therefore, the organisational domain comprises three sets of indicators: organisation, financial and human resources, and activities. Most prominent among the parameters guiding the definition of the organisational domain are the parameters related to the BIA, that is, the BIA's size, its territorial and hierarchical setting, membership patterns, functions, degree of the internationalisation, financial and human resources, and cooperation patterns.

The organisational domain strongly affects the collective activity of associations. There are formal rules that distinguish certain types of actors that are eligible to join an association. The definition of potential members separates those members and interests that are admitted into the association from others that are excluded. The membership density indicates the extent to which an association is able to recruit potential members. Therefore, the organisational domain delimits the sectoral scope of an association. The sectoral scope on its turn has a twofold affect on access to a public institution because it affects the range of issues an association deals with, as well as the spectrum of interests it accommodates. A narrow sectoral domain or subsectoral domain results in a small number of members and maintains the homogenous nature of the interests in question. In such circumstances, an internal compromise is easily reached and an association can act vigorously. However, an association with a too narrow sectoral scope risks representing the interests of only a very small group and, therefore, is irrelevant to policy–makers. In contrast, a broad sectoral domain determines a high number of members of an association, but makes the interests very heterogenous. The latter makes it more difficult to agree on a joint definition of collective goals. Frequently, as a way out from such a situation, a comprehensive but ultimately too vague position is formulated, and this is also not very relevant to decision makers. For example, as it has been already outlined in the previous part, EU institutions state that they prefer to negotiate with more all–encompassing associations possessing information on European encompassing interest or information on domestic encompassing interest, because it relieves them of the task of dealing with many narrow claims.

Moreover, the organisational domain determines the territorial scope of the groups and the level of government at which they tend to represent interests. Na-

tional confederations[21] represent their members that are separate companies or associations situated in different Lithuanian regions. This is important for public institutions that do not wish to deal with numerous separate regional interest associations or interest groups. However, Greenwood and Webster (2000) argue that the internal segmentation and heterogeneity of BIAs weakens their position as partners for decision–makers.

Continuing with BIAs, the latter can grant membership to different kinds of actors. Depending on what kind of actors the BIA accepts (individual companies, individual entrepreneurs or groups of companies/associations) determines their position in the multi–layered associational hierarchy. On the one hand, there are BIAs that allow the membership of business related organisations, individual companies, or entrepreneurs from the bottom layer (low–order BIAs). Such membership indicates quite a narrow domain and aggregate interests at a relatively low level. On the other hand, confederations (high–order or peak BIAs) are located on higher levels of the associational population. They may not have the right to give orders to their members, however, they aggregate their interests and to some extent coordinate their activities and this ensures better access to EU policy–makers.

Besides the two types of associations mentioned above, there is the third type of association where membership is open to both individual companies and associations. In such a situation, individual companies avoid appearing in BIA with a lower level position. In turn, mixed type associations obtain additional resources from individual companies and, in addition, Eising (2005) emphasises that they are placed on a higher level in the associational system and have even better access to policy–makers than do confederations.

Finally, membership density is a very important factor that indicates the extent to which a BIA can mobilise its potential members. A greater membership density indicates both organisational success in the mobilisation of an association's constituency and greater representation of its domain. This should improve the access of BIAs to policy–makers because incorporating the points of view of all stakeholders in the political process increases the democratic legitimacy of policies.

The second organisational feature, as already mentioned, is resources at the disposal of actors. To ensure their survival and maintenance, associations need a more or less stable supply of resources from their members and their environment (Wilson 1973, p. 30). Being voluntary organisations, BIAs make demands on the time, money and efforts of their members. Financial resources are the main prerequisite for their activities. Financial resources allow BIAs to have permanent staff. A permanent staff enables BIAs to pursue internal and external objectives more effectively and – Knoke (1988, 1990) argues – create an environment that signals long–term activities and continuous relations with state authorities. Literature about the research on interest representation (Olson 1065, Schmitter and Streeck 1981, Knoke 1990) stresses that to extract resources from their members, associations offer them different incentives. The incentives appear in the forms of selective (certain services on offer for members) or collective goods (seeking to affect the public policy–making process). More resources are supposed to increase the capacity to

[21] High–order or peak BIAs are BIAs including other low–order BIAs.

act, however, according to organisation theory, resources on their own are poor predictors of organisational behaviour and capacities. The whole set, consisting of an association's representational characteristics, its functional specialisation, its experience as well as its presence in Brussels, must be taken into consideration when evaluating an association's ability to represent its constituency.

Resources might, on the other hand, be not only financial. Information is also a very important resource. Expert knowledge makes an association attractive to policy makers.

The following organisational aspects are included in this research: resources in terms of an association's budget; an association's focus on interest representation as indicated by the share in the budget allocated for this function; an association's focus on the provision of service as indicated by the budget share allocated for this function; an association's domain of representation (sector, cross–sectoral) and type of members (individuals, companies, associations, other organisations); the degree of representation for their domain as indicated by the share of potential members being organised; an association's experience in interest representation in terms of its age; an association's presence in Brussels with an office and an association's presence in EU policy networks as indicated by its membership in EU associations.

2.2.1.2. Sectoral Domain and Business Interest Association's Behaviour

BIAs exist within various sectoral structures. According to sectoral approaches, such as meso corporatism, sectoral governance or policy networks, relationships between interest organisations and the government depend on economic sectors or policy areas (Hollingsworth et al. 1994). They explain that the relations between BIAs and the government vary across sectors within the same polity and for organisations with similar properties because, firstly, like the technical and economic features of products or production processes, sectoral exchanges among producers, suppliers and consumers have an influence on state–business relations (ibid.).

Moreover, state organisations themselves can include sectoral particularities. In the research literature, several sectoral features were found to be crucial variables that influence the access and impact of BIAs. On the one hand, a high degree of internationalisation and concentration within the industry are several of these variables (Eising, 2005). This research supports Eising's assumption that a sector is not a concept that still needs to be approached in a holistic way, but has to be broken down into variables. Basically, according to the literature, BIAs, as owners of capital, are 'bound to create internal conflict among them' (Schmitter and Streeck, 1999, p. 14). This dilemma can be defined as a dichotomy or contradiction between short–term and long–term interests. 'The more homogeneous a BIA is with regard to its membership, the stronger the competition among its members in the market is likely to be. Correspondingly, the more heterogeneous a BIA, the greater the diversity of interests concerning rates of exchange between different functional areas or

sectors of the economy. […] The internal politics of BIA can be conceptualised as centering on the problem of reconciling conflicts stemming either from internal homogeneity or from internal heterogeneity […] what one could term the management of diversity' (ibid. p. 15). The parameters of the economic concentration and belonging to one certain economic sector or cross sector BIA considerably influence the behaviour of the BIA itself, as all economic sectors have different positions in the national, European and international markets (ibid. p. 28).

This research focuses on the sector's properties that are considered most relevant in treatment of the sector: the economic weight of its members, the degree of concentration among its members and the importance of public institutions for the association. The mentioned indicators make influence upon BIAs' behaviour.

2.2.2. Characteristics of the Logic of Influence

Existing scholarly literature reiterates that national factors for state–business interests' interrelations do not lose their importance even in the era of economic globalisation. Two major country specific factors influence the behaviour of business interest associations. They are: country specific polity styles and the polity as the main operating level of BIAs. Country specific factors explain system–specific regularities of BIAs' behaviour. According to Lehmbruch (1991 p. 148), policy styles are the result of 'collective historical experience' which shape the leading ideas about those relations and influence the design of inter–organisational relations. They are settled in the patterns of BIAs' behaviour and access to political institutions. Eising (2005) stresses that the extension of domestic style and practices to the EU level may either facilitate or hinder the intended access to the European political institution.

Factors of the logic of influence include interactions with the state. The state or state agencies have interests of their own; state agencies compete with each other for scarce resources for budgetary allocations; the substantive content of the policies pursued by the state and state agencies imposes certain requirements of information and compliance if these policies are to be effectively designed and implemented; the state with its monopoly over the utilisation of legitimate coercion and its symbolic capacity to represent universalistic societal interests possesses important general resources that state agencies may use to influence the organisational structure of business interest associations. Interaction with the state should correspond either to general (national) conditions or to specific conditions. The latter have been evaluated through the analytical research of secondary sources.

2.2.2.1. Effects of General Characteristics on Business Interest Association's Behaviour

The logic of influence tells us that BIAs need to follow/obey administrative rationalities in order to have contact with public authorities and be successful

(Schmitter and Streeck 1999). Firstly, it is important to identify certain general characteristics or political process of a given state. The features of the political process are regarded to influence the functions and organisational properties of a BIA. These general variables also explain why BIAs demonstrate different characteristics from state to state.

Furthermore, the legal framework and its practical implications are extremely important for BIAs. For example, in Lithuania businesses are not obliged to join associations. The decision to join or not to join a BIA is voluntary, based on one's own logic. Public subsidies given to BIAs can act as an incentive. Being a member of BIA allows for more opportunities for government consultation regarding legislation. Moreover, the systems of social dialogue and public policy–making are important. The power of BIAs also depends upon the strategy of their interlocutors, i.e., the association's authority and the public authority. The latter's position is very important, concerning who it is inviting and addressing for consultation: whether it is a sectoral association or a large, general association. Powerful BIAs are more capable of transnational mobility, meaning that their members can credibly threaten to move their locations to another country if their demands are not met. Also, the associational system of business and its actors is crucially significant, in fact, as much as are cultural factors. Many observed variations can be attributed to cultural differences. Culture is a very complex phenomenon that embraces rather different aspects of economic and social life. But this category should be used with care.

2.2.2.2. Effects of Special Characteristics on Business Interest Association's Behaviour

It is an empirically obvious fact that the form and the content (structure and role) of state policy varies significantly from sector to sector. This might be explained due to the varying differences of sectors and the state. Exploration of these differences should help identify the variations of BIAs across different sectors within the same polity.

It is just as important to explore direct transactions between the state and BIAs. Direct transactions usually take the form of subsidies for the existence and encouragement of BIAs, their eagerness to exchange information, etc. There can also be indirect transactions between the state and BIAs through the enterprises that affect BIAs. Indirect transactions take the form of tax discounts, subsidies, purchases, etc. In this case, the logic of influence functions similarly to the logic of membership, by impacting the needs and interests of actual or potential members of BIAs and by determing their requirements for BIA intermediation (Schmitter and Streeck 1999). However, it should be noted that this aspect does not fall within the scope of this research. Table 2 depicts the variables that are of great importance in each of the previously listed dimensions and their descriptions.

Table 2 The logic of influence and its impact[22]

	Transactions between state and BIAs	Description
General Conditions affecting the polity or economy as a whole	'Rules of the game'	Conditions, under which BIAs can be founded, form and operate. Conditions under which foundation and recognition of alternative and rival BIAs go on. Tax situation.
	Centralisation	Degree of territorial and functional centralisation of state's institutions.
	Political party dominance	Extent to which national political institutions are controlled by dominating party.
	Professionalisation and autonomy	Degree of professionalisation and autonomy of public bureaucracy.
Sectoral Conditions affecting separate sectors	Configuration of state agencies for dealing with sector	Existence of specialised public agencies tend not to intermediate with BIAs but to colonise their functions.
	Extent of subsidised programmes to BIAs in the sector	When a BIA is delegated to implement a programme and receives the required funds to be distributed in the sector, this certainly impacts the behaviour of the enterprises in the sector.
	Information needs of the state in the sector	BIAs prefer being the source of information, and not transferring this function directly to enterprises or knowledgeable businesspeople.
	Specialised institutions of functional representation	Presence (also absence) affects BIAs functions and structures. BIA participation in this kind of representative body ensures being in the privileged area of interests intermediation.

Below presented Figure 5 presents the proposed integrated model for evaluation of the behaviour of the Lithuanian BIAs and their relations with public policy institutions encompassing the major theoretical previously analysed dimensions and the characteristics of the above presented model of LoM and model of LoI. The proposed model is adapted to the application at the national and European Union level. The data gathered according to the proposed model, firstly, let describe the landscape of the Lithuanian BIAs. Secondly and most importantly, the model evaluates and explains the behaviour of the Lithuanian business interest associations. Besides, the model lets measure the defensive statements of the thesis.

[22] Source: adopted from Schmitter and Streck 1999 p. 34–35.

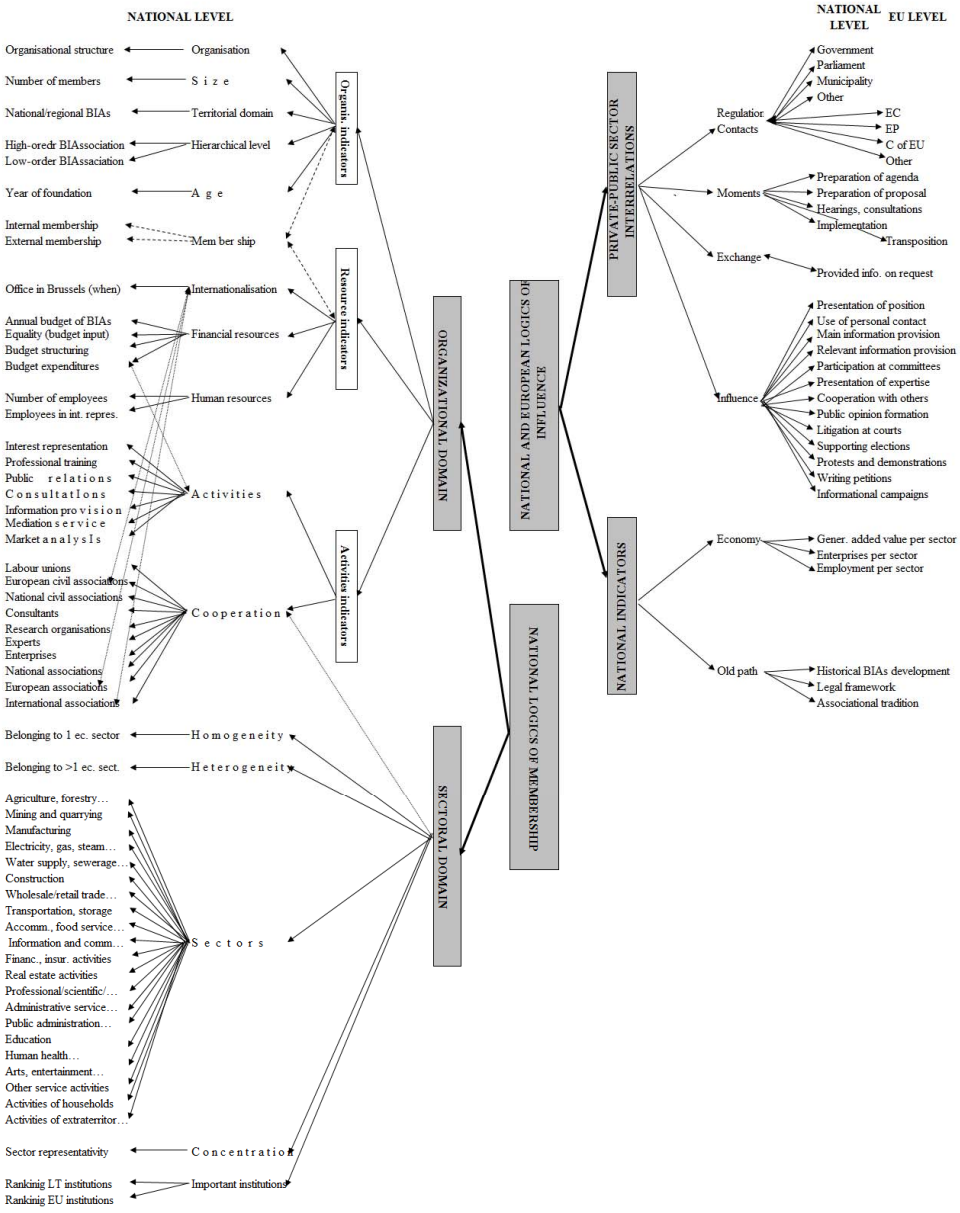


Figure 5 Model of BIAs' behaviour[23]

[23] Source: adopted from Schmitter and Streck (1999), Schneider and Tenbücken (2002), Lindblom (1977), Wilson (2003), Kohler–Koch and Quittkat (1999).adopted from Schmitter and Streck (1999), Schneider and Tenbücken (2002).

For the empirical research the suggested model of the Lithuanian BIAs' behaviour translates the theoretical concepts of the thesis into the measurable and manageable indicators and provides for detail investigation of the Lithuanian BIAs' behaviour at the national and European Union level. The model ensures the comprehensive evaluation of the dependent variable of the thesis – the political behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs that rests within the dual nature of BIAs operating between two sets of actors: their members and their interlocutors. This complex existence and the behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs are assessed in the thesis using the proposed model.

2.3. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

2.3.1. Data Collection and Sources of Research

The identification of the appropriate unit of the analysis to investigate in order to reach the objective of the thesis is a significant step in the research design. The key factor in selecting and making decisions about the unit of analysis is to decide what unit it is that one wants to be able to say something about at the end of the investigation (Patton 1994, Neuman and Kreuger 2003). There is a certain division between the choice of the unit of analysis among BIAs' researchers while analysing business interest associations. The following section reasons the choice of Lithuanian domestic BIAs and their behaviour as the unit of analysis, presents the methodological instrument used to collect the data and other sources of the research.

It is an important moment in the research to introduce the arguments for choosing a domestic BIAs for analysis. It can be done with the help of the concept of Europeanisation which is traditionally applied to analyse the impact of EU governance on member states' domestic environment. Europeanisation consists of process of construction, discussion and institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms, which are defined and consolidated first in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, political structures and public policies (Bulmer and Radelli 2005, p. 341). The impact of Europeanisation upon EU member states and Lithuanian BIAs is undeniable; however, the thesis holds a different focus, stemming from the robustness of interest groups against the mentioned influences that, together with national specificities regarding self–regulation, persist and maintain a regulatory diversity of BIAs landscapes across the EU (Van Waarden 1994). And it proposes another strong argument for having a closer look at domestic interest groups, despite social scientists showing a clear tendency towards the analysis of supranational business interest associations. Generally speaking, EU integration leads to closer interactions between the formerly separated political units and the combination of economic markets. However, empirical research frustrates these neo–functional assumptions, and argues that despite the high degree of transnational interaction, the attention of BIAs has not been di-

verted away from the national level (Kohler–Koch 2000). The findings show that BIAs and business companies establish contacts with both national and European levels of decision–making and BIAs address national targets even more often than European targets (Sidenius 1999).

Moreover, there are further reasons for opting for a national level of interaction. Firstly, especially in those policy areas where there is a greater interest in not making decisions rather than in making them, the pressures at the national level are the main reason why BIAs maintain a strong national base (Schmitter and Streeck 1999). Secondly, the large majority of organised action and sectoral forms of public–private cooperation are embedded on the national level (Lehmkuhl 1998). Thirdly, recent studies have suggested that national arrangements of concertation of disputes survive if BIAs and other interest groups manage to shift the functional content from demand to supply issues (Heinisch 2000, Visser and Hemerijck 1997). In addition, in their attempt to meet their increasing obligations to the EU, national governments have to rely more and more on the negotiated consent of their respective social partners in order to obtain the 'voluntary and active assent' that is so important for competitive success (Schmitter and Grote 1997).

Due to the rather limited information on Lithuanian BIAs and the lack of previous comprehensive research, the author of this thesis understands the necessity of seeking out Lithuanian BIAs as the unit of analysis since BIAs themselves can render the most exact information, firstly, on their organisational, sectoral, etc. domains, which is very crucial for drawing the general landscape for the first time based on empirical research on the Lithuanian business interest associations' behaviour at local, national and supranational levels.

In order to make the investigation manageable in an empirical respect and relevant in a theoretical context, this doctoral thesis operationalises the concept of a BIA in terms of its functional domain, territorial domain, sectoral domain, hierarchical level and actual operating level:

- Functional domain – this refers to the representational tasks performed by BIAs. The research differentiates the type of interest being represented, i.e., business employees' interests and business employers' interests. This research focuses on Lithuanian BIAs that represent the interests of business employers[24].
- Territorial domain – as the study focuses on BIAs in one country, it comprises both BIAs whose domain is nation–wide, and BIAs whose domain is province–wide or region–wide.
- Sectoral domain – the thesis includes all BIAs whose sectoral domains are both sectoral and cross–sectoral. Sectoral BIAs cover one economy sector according to NACE classification. Cross–sectoral or umbrella BIAs cover more than one economy sector, according to NACE classification.

[24] The research does not include trade unions.

- Hierarchical level – BIAs can build complex pyramids of associations. Lower–level BIAs have business companies (or even natural persons[25]) as their members and sometimes themselves are members of other BIAs; and so called higher–order associations or peak–level BIAs are associations of associations or confederations. This thesis does not discriminate either of these BIAs.
- Operating level – this refers to the fact that records of the BIAs existence should be present in the official Centre of Registers and should be operating.

The associational system of business in Lithuania includes all Lithuanian BIAs that meet the definitional criteria listed above, i.e., Lithuanian low–order and higher–order sectoral and cross–sectoral BIAs acting on national or regional levels and representing the interests of their members. This analytical level gives us a comprehensive map of BIAs in Lithuania: owned human and financial resources, memberships, size, internationalisation, etc.

At the very first stage of the research, a practical issue which proved to be very disadvantageous for this type of the research was encountered. There is no single official data base or source which provides a clear indication of the number of Lithuanian BIAs. According to the Law on Associations (Law on Associations 2004) an association can be established by able, natural persons and/or legal persons by contracting. The minimal number of founders necessary to establish an association is three. There is no differentiation among different types of associations. It means that all possible associations are kept in one 'pot' and all official information coming from the state's statistical bodies provides information on these associations that in reality comprise a huge variety of organisations that are involved in absolutely different activities led by different motivating factors. For example, according to the State Department of Statistics in 2010, there were 13 950 associations registered and 7 957 of them were associations in operation (Report on Registered Legal Entities 2010).

At present, the only way of finding out the number of Lithuanian BIAs is to view the whole body of the registered associations in order to select BIAs. Lithuanian BIAs were selected from the official site of the national Centre of Registers, where one of its major functions is to register legal entities in Lithuania. Although it is an official site, it does not guarantee the accuracy of all pieces of information it contains, especially regarding contact information, therefore some additional sources were used. Other data basis of legal entities were approached, e. g., catologue of Companies available at www.visalietuva.lt, database of public institutions available at www.valstybe.com and database of Lithuanian companies available at www.cr.lt. Also Centers for Business Information were frequently contacted in order to find the contacts (especially in the regions) of some BIAs.

While selecting the BIAs, the following associations were rejected as they did not fall within the interests of the scope of the research: associations uniting the representatives of a certain profession, e.g., the Association of Barpersons; society

[25] The minimum number of members in any association (BIAs included) in Lithuania is 3 members, according to legal regulations. The base of three can consist of able, natural persons (not younger than 18 years old) and/or legal persons (Law on Associations 2004).

associations, e.g., the Association of Large Families; associations of state institutions, e.g., the Association of State Universities; sports associations, e.g., the Lithuanian Curling Association; associations uniting people sharing a particular hobby, e.g., the Association of Collectors; associations acting as boards, e.g., the association 'Business Board of Economic and Trade Cooperation with the Republic of Beylorussia'; associations established to fund business, e.g. the Association of Business Fund; associations consisting of natural persons; associations of youth organisations, e.g., the Druskininkai Youth Organisation 'Free Business Ideas'; cultural heritage associations, e.g., the Association of Lithuanian Towers and Castles; associations uniting foreign businesspersons, e.g., the Association of Spanish Businesspersons; associations mixing the business and public sector, e.g., the Association of Klaipeda Young Businesspersons and Politicians; associations acting as clubs of natural persons, e.g., the Club of Vilnija Businesspersons; associations acting as country communities, i.e., uniting village communities, e.g., Village Community; or associations promoting agricultural interests, e.g., the Association of Cattle Breeding. These organisations were excluded because their logic differs to some extent from that of business interest groups (Olson 1965). The BIAs acting as purely administrative bodies that implement certain public policy functions on behalf of the state and BIAs that purely provide certain services are excluded from the research as well. Associations that do not perform any associational activity or have stopped their operations according to the data provided in the Centre of Registers were rejected as irrelevant and not surveyed.

In order to establish the context for this research, a thorough analysis of secondary sources on Lithuanian business associations and the regulatory context in which they operate in Lithuania was carried out. Firstly, academic studies and development reports on the subject were done. Secondly, legal documents – codes, laws, decisions, circulars, etc. – relating to Lithuanian business in general and business associations in particular were analysed. Various sources were consulted to collect these legal documents. The review of secondary material also focused on the statutes and reports of BIAs themselves.

The data on BIAs themselves and their interest intermediation was gathered during the quantitative survey. The surveye's questionnaire was constructed on the grounds of the proposed model in the thesis and, moreover, the questionnaires of the previous research in the field were consulted, for example, the research performed by Kohler–Koch and Quittkat (1999).

To ensure that the questionnaire was correctly understood, five pilot questionings were undertaken. A series of proposals were made as to how the questionnaire could be improved, or how any ambiguities could be resolved.

The questionnaire formulated for this specific research consists of two major sections. The first section of the questionnaire makes inquiries regarding behavioural patterns in a multi–level system: (1) BIAs' contacts with public institutions on national and European Union levels and the frequencies of these contacts; (2) significance of public institutions on both levels linked to Lithuanian BIAs; (3) interest representation timing and tactics applied by BIAs; and (4) cooperational patterns of BIAs. The second section of the questionnaire asked for basic information

about organisational mapping: (1) the size, services provided, activities and establishment of Lithuanian BIAs; (2) internal and external membership; (3) degree of internationalisation; (4) financial and human resources; (5) concentration, economic domain and weight; and (6) sectoral domain. The questionnaire covered twelve open and closed questions – many of them asked to give a ranking of a certain indicator. The questionnaire was set out in the Lithuanian language. The requirements for the efficient construction of a questionnaire were respected and carefully observed (Diekmann 2002, p. 410, 442; Cohen, Manion et al. 2007). It is important to note that operational staff employees were requested to complete the questionnaire aiming at information based answers (see Annex 2).

The use of surveys has always been an intricate part of methodology. The research agenda was clearly defined before the data was collected. With the aim to collect the necessary data for the research, the thesis questionnaire (see Annex 1) was sent by e–mail to all the Lithuanian BIAs under research. All in all, 150 questionnaires were sent out (see Annex 2). Each questionnaire was accompanied with a short introduction as part of the questionnaire, providing information about the research and its objectives, and a brief letter thanking the respondents for their cooperation and an indication of the deadline for sending the filled in questionnaire back to the researcher[26]. Post–notification calls were made for a period of several days after the questionnaires were sent out. Some completed questionnaires were returned. However, the process of questioning BIAs was the most time consuming task of the whole research project because of the reaction of the BIAs. As will become clear from the empirical findings, this can partly be explained by the fact that BIAs with only one employee find it very exhausting and time consuming (maybe even inefficient) to dedicate up to 45 minutes or even one hour to complete a questionnaire. Since the number of completed questionnaires that were returned was too few, even after a number of notifications, the survey strategy was changed slightly and a telephone survey was introduced with the same questionnaire. A certain part of the survey was implemented by questioning representatives of particular BIAs in person. The latter part does not constitute a considerable share of the data collected, therefore, the percentages are not officially indicated and the conclusion is based on the fact that the quantitative survey was performed via e–mail and telephone.

Out of the 150 questionnaires distributed, 112 came back fully completed, while 38 questionnaires were not returned mainly for the following reasons: (1) regular procrastination over completing the questionnaire and finally avoiding its completion altogether and (2) explicit position of unwillingness to cooperate with participation in the research and completing the questionnaire.

A central concern of all kinds of social science research is how to generalise the results that are drawn. All Lithuanian associations which can be defined as business interest associations constitute the population of the research. In accordance with the research question, only BIAs at the national level were taken into consideration. Table 3 presents the return rate of the survey. Annex 3 presents the complete list of surveyed BIAs and a detailed return rate table.

[26] For more strategies, see Diekmann 2002, p. 441.

Table 3 Rate of return of the survey[27]

Business associations addressed (N)	150
Questionnaires returned (N)	112
Rate of return (%)	75

Since Lithuanian BIAs constitute a finite population in this thesis, the sample size corresponds to the size of the finite population. At the initial stage of the research, a complete list of all Lithuanian BIAs was made (N=150). All members of the finite population had equal possibilities to participate in the empirical survey. The completed questionnaires were returned by mail, fax or in person. The figure of returned survey–questionnaires was equal to 112 (n). The review of the completed questionnaires confirmed that all returned questionnaires could be included in the further process of the empirical research. The main criterion of the review was that the questionnaire be completed in an orderly and understandable manner. The coefficient K indicates the representativity of the reseach and equals to 75%. There were 38 respondents who dropped out of the empirical survey. According to Urbina (1997), 75% is the threshold of representativity when it is ensured.

Concluding this section, it is important to mention that all the collected data was later reasonably coded and prepared for the following step of data processing, summary and presentation.

2.3.2. Data Analysis Methods

The survey statistical data was processed in line with a scheme that was established in advance, and the calculations were done with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences programme. The reliability and validity of the research construct was tested and proven using the psychometric method. In addition to descriptive statistics, the research methods applied in the statistical analysis of the data include: correlation, multiple regression, factor analysis and multidimensional scaling. Hypotheses tests have been based on Mann–Whitney U criterion.

The aim of all research is to formulate reliable and objective conclusions. The reliability and validity of the empirical research is tightly related to the research construct, the reliability of which can be weighted with a psychometric analysis. With the aim of proving the reliability and validity of the research variables, a reliability test was applied and internal consistency of the research construct was estimated. The latter was assessed according to four parameters: Cronbach α coefficient, item total correlation, factor loading and variance.

[27] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the thesis framework.

Table 4 Internal consistency test[28] (survey Q1c)

Dimensions	Items	N items	Variance %	Cronbach α	L*			r/itt**		
					Mean	min	max	mean	min	max
European Commission	Administrative level Political level	2	**82.59**	**NA** [29]	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.82	0.65	0.94
Council of the EU	COREPER General Secretariat Political level	3	**59.93**	**0.84**	0.77	0.65	0.88	0.57	0.21	0.85
European Parliament	Secretariat MEPs, assistants Committees	3	**79.01**	**0.94**	0.89	0.88	0.90	0.79	0.66	0.90

Table 4 shows a demonstration of the internal consistency test of Q1c of the survey questionnaire. The complete internal consistency analysis tables are presented in Annex 3 of the thesis. As the internal consistency test indicates the domination of questionnaires high factor loadings from 0.54 to 0.96 (in the table presented above, from 0.77 to 0.91); the variance fluctuates from 33.26% to 91.89% (in the table presented above, from 59.93% to 82.59%); item total correlation varies from 0.28 to 0.92 (in the table presented above, from 0.57 to 0.82). Thus, all statistical requirements have been met[30].

As part of the data processing, the observed variables of the empirical survey were modelled with the method of *factor analysis*[31]. The Principal Component Analysis extraction method was used. It helped to transform a number of possibly correlated variables into a smaller number of uncorrelated variables called principal components (Anastasi, Urbina 1997, Merkys 2008). The initial factor analysis built in six scales (EC, EP, CoEU, national Government, national Parliament and national municipalities). Moreover, in this case factor loadings are positive[32].

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[28] See complete list of abbreviations for the meanings. Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the thesis framework.

[29] NA–not applied. Cronbach α is not calculated when the number of items is less than 2 (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

[30] It is commonly accepted that the value of Cronbach α should take values $0.5 \leq \alpha < 1$ (Kardelis 2002). Item total correlation value should be more than 0.2. A lesser value indicates that the corresponding item does not correlate very well with the scale overall and, thus, it may be dropped. Factor loading cannot be negative. Variance cannot be less than 10% (in such cases, the factor is not further interpreted in the research) (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

[31] Factor analysis is traditionally used in social sciences to pool initial observed variables and describe their variability. The information gained about their interdependencies is used to reduce the set of variables in a dataset (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

[32] It is commonly accepted that variance cannot be less than 10% (in such cases, the factor is not further interpreted in the research). Factor loading cannot be negative (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

A significant role in the classical test theory is given to normal distribution. The further findings of the psychometric analysis, while using the tests of normality according to Kolmogorov–Smirnov's and Shapiro–Wilk's criteria, proved no presence of normal distribution. Therefore, the thesis defensive statements have been statistically tested applying a non–parametrical statistical test of two independent samples[33].

The research defensive statements have been tested with Mann–Whitney U criterion. The former was applied in cases where two independent samples of observations were assessed.

Correlation was applied to measure statistical relationships between two ranked variables. The degree of correlation was evaluated with the Spearman correlation coefficient[34].

The thesis applied the *regression* method to measure the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable. Regression helped the researcher to understand how the typical value of the dependent variable changes when the independent variable is varied[35] (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002, Rudzkienė and Burinskienė 2007). The research applied linear regression, whereas several independent variables are estimated. Below linear regression equation is presented where y is dependent variable, x – independent variable, α and β – constants and ε – error term (Rudzkienė and Burinskienė 2007, p. 48): $y = \alpha + \beta x + \varepsilon$.

At the final stages of the research, the statistical *multidimensional scaling method*[36] (MDS) was applied. Two dimensions were integrated into the model: frequency of contact with public authorities and frequency of provision of information under request.

There are strengths and weaknesses in any single data collection strategy. Using more than one data collection approach permits the researcher to combine strengths and correct some of the defficiences of any one source of data. Building checks and balances into a research design through multiple data collection strategies is called triangulation (Patton 1994, p. 60). It is a method to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it, or at least do not contradict it. Various types of triangulation are possible: methodological triangulation, data triangulation, investigators triangulation and theory triangulation (Denzin 1978). The thesis applied methodological triangulation, data triangulation and theory triangulation.

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[33] Non parametrical statistics is appropriate in the thesis because the researcher is dealing with ranked observations (which are crucial for a non–parametric approach). When normal distribution is present, parametrical methods of statistics can be applied (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

[34] n statistics, the Spearman correlation coefficient is a measure of the linear dependence (correlation) between two variables, giving a value between +1 and −1 inclusive. It is widely used in the sciences as a measure of the strength of linear dependence between two variables (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002, Rudzkienė and Burinskienė 2007).

[35] The regression method evaluates the strength of certain variables: how the dependent variable will change if the independent variable changes. Regression measures one–way impact (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002, Rudzkienė and Burinskienė 2007).

[36] Multidimensional scaling is a set of related statistical techniques often used in information visualisation for exploring similarities or dissimilarities in data (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

The mail and telephone questioning generated two different types of data: quantitative and qualitative. Since both types of data were used, the technique of data triangulation was applied. Furthermore, the use of multiple methods to study a single problem and test the thesis defensive statements determines methodological triangulation. Finally, theory triangulation was manifested through the application of multiple theoretical approaches to interpret the data. The evaluation models for Lithuanian BIAs' development, landscape and behaviour analyses were proven to be relevant and valid. The following part of the thesis presents the findings of the empirical research.

2.4. DERIVING RESEARCH STATEMENTS

First of all, it has to be noted that large parts of this study are inductively conducted. There was little prior knowledge of how the dependent variable, namely, the Lithuanian business interest associations' behaviour could be characterised. However, there are some guiding assumptions and general guiding research statements on which the following chapter will be based and which can be presented even without precise knowledge of the dependent variable.

Furthermore, it is important to explain the dependent variable better. One part of it is the development process on national BIAs. This part constitutes the dynamic aspect of the dependent variable. A further important aspect of the dependent variable is the present characteristics of Lithuanian BIAs nowadays. This aspect is the static part of the dependent variable. The two aspects are not identical. Firstly, the development of each BIA was not tracked and the general development trends of BIAs are followed. However, in the case of the static aspect (which equals to the situation today), it shows variations and as such, these characteristics are important for the research. Thus, the dependent variable is split into a dynamic and static component.

Note that the development aspect is only examined as far as it has an effect on the associational system in Lithuania or certain associations. Obviously, several levels of the analysis are highly interrelated, but the issues concerning the development of BIAs are only be regarded if they are useful for the understanding of the behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs.

Considering this, the following derivation of research statements about the dependent variable and independent variables were made.

The first fundamental research statement is that the Lithuanian business interest associations' landscape is rather monopolised in the hands of several particular business interest associations.

The second defensive statement argues that Lithuanian BIAs maintain higher degree of access patterns with public authority institutions at the national level in comparison to the European level. However, since politics today is mainly EU politics, the European political level has also become more important to the national BIAs and this is reflected in the professionalisation of BIAs' behaviour, i.e., this might materialise in the performed interest representation strategies, appearance of

specific organisational positions or units which deal with European affairs, and also the establishment of an office in Brussels, representation of interests at the EU level, membership in a European business interest association, etc.

The third thesis defensive statement claims that regarding the national level, Lithuanian BIAs, in their choices on where to exert influence and represent interests, maintain a balance among national public authority institutions: the Government and the Parliament. Considering the European level, Lithuanian BIAs have the highest degree of access patterns to the Council of the European Union and the lowest degree of access patterns to the European Commission.

The last fourth defensive statement argues that the behaviour of the Lithuanian business interest associations at the national and European Union level vary, according to the (1) the size of BIA; (2) the level of associational action (low–order BIA or high–order BIA); (3) the interest domain of the BIA (sectoral BIAs and cross–sectoral BIAs) and (4) characteristics of the membership (homogeneous and heterogeneous members of BIAs).

The generated research statements are not only specific but also testable. It is important to emphasise that despite the research statements listed above, the analysis of the underlying processes – in the sense of knowledge accumulation as argued by Mahoney (2003, p. 134) and the building of empirical information, has been an important part of the research. Lacking other earlier empirical material, the currently chosen research design helped to build empirical data which not only rendered a solid ground, but also generated an analytical debate on the behaviour of Lithuanian business interest associations.

PART 3 LITHUANIAN BUSINESS INTEREST ASSOCIATIONS' BEHAVIOUR

Up to this part, two major stages of the thesis have been undertaken. Previous theoretical considerations demonstrated that, on the one hand, organised interests are an important element of public policy and, on the other hand, that business interest associations operate in two environments, each imposing specific imperatives on the organisation of BIAs and on the behaviour chosen by BIAs. Therefore, these two imperatives include, firstly, the characteristics of BIAs' behaviour and, secondly, the environment in which BIAs interact and perform.

BIAs are the most active and organised players in the policy–making process in the national and European Union decision–making arena compared to other interest organisations. For this BIAs have to be developed into new, sophisticated political organisations that can and do influence policy through a number of political channels, and that we need to understand the micro mechanism of BIAs' action and behaviour, just as we have to comprehend the process of political institutions. What constitutes a BIA in a state and its internal political make–up differs across territorial, functional, sectoral, hierarchical, and operational domains of the BIAs. The quantitative survey performed in 2007–2009 and thorough analyses of secondary sources are central to the analysis of the development and the state of the Lithuanian BIAs' landscape and behaviour patterns.

3.1. DEVELOPMENT OF LITHUANIAN BUSINESS INTEREST ASSOCIATIONS

Social scientists argue that the characteristics of associational systems are deeply influenced and determined by the socio–economic and political history of each single country. Surprisingly, given roughly similar starting points, the post–communist countries vary on both the number of emerging groups as well as their organisational characteristics (Lanzalaco 1992). According to Padgett (2000), the centralised, hierarchical design that is characteristic of corporatist systems is unlikely to emerge in early stages of democratic transformation, and with their social structures, post–communist societies are likely to generate a more fragmented spectrum of interests, reflected in interest group systems which are closer to a pattern of pluralism. However, Pérez–Solórzano Borragán (2005) argues that in the post–communist context, the state plays a prominent role in the management of day–to–day politics and, therefore, corporatist arrangements are the norm, while political parties and elections epitomise the materialisation of pluralist politics to the detriment of interest politics. Anyway, as it was previously stated no state can claim to be described as the representative of one clear model of interrelations between the state and organised business interest groups. Some authors do not reckon it feasible to associate organised interest groups of Lithuania with other post–Soviet type interest groups. Mačiukaitė–Žvinienė (2008) argues that the intercon-

nection between the three sectors – the government, private and third sectors in the Baltic States – should not be related to post–Soviet type of interconnection and it is suggested that the Baltic States have their own individual type, which could be called Baltic type.

In any case, what distinguishes interest groups from other political actors is their choice to exert influence upon decision–makers externally. Business interest groups maintain their autonomy and do not become one of the formal decision–makers. The following section also debates whether the autonomy is real in the case of Lithuanian BIAs.

According to Lukošaitis (2000, 2004), Lithuania can be described a state where different models take place: pluralism, corporatism and clientalism. Though many 'civil' organisations were operating during the Soviet era, they were usually controlled by the state and had little authority over their own activities. Additionally, membership was rarely grounded on a voluntary basis (Žiliukaite, Ramonaitė et al. 2006). After the restoration of independence, Lithuania experienced what is called *chaotic pluralism*. Many interest groups were established rather spontaneously. Frequently chaotic pluralism turns into oligopolic pluralism which is characterised by the fact that equal opportunities of interest groups are ensured only in the social sector, whereas the public authorities accept only certain acknowledged interest groups with exceptional status. The authors Kaminskas (2001a, 2001b) and Kamarauskaite (2001) maintain that in Lithuania's case, pluralism is not fully functional due to serious doubts whether an equal footing is provided for all players and an equal competition environment is created for everybody. The same can be said about the corporatism model in Lithuania. Some features are obvious, to cite an example, certain agreements between the state and BIAs. However, the agreements that are made between the state and BIAs are often empty and are not followed through. Therefore, Lukošaitis (2004) argues that they do not ensure social tranquillity and do not support consolidated democracy. Furthermore, rather many cases of clientelism are popularly reported by mass media from time to time. Moreover, Adomėnas, Augustinaitis et al. (2007) observe that democracy is not stable in Lithuania and a passive political culture prevails. Though society might disapprove of certain state authority decisions, it feels incapable of changing anything. Moreover, decision–makers do not recognise society and its organisations as important elements of democracy consolidation and welfare creation. The increasing overall distrust hinders in many cases the establishment of non–government, non–profit organisations.

The existing literature acknowledges that one of the exceptional features of the post–communist countries is the simultaneous appearance of political parties and interest groups. Duvanova (2006), Hausner (1996), McMenamin (2003), and Steen (1997) reason that, obviously, the existing political parties did not deal with the interest groups and that they did not wish to let interest groups participate in the decision–making process. Thus, political system development scenarios were constructed by the political parties themselves. Mainly, interest groups were kept on the periphery and were not granted equal rights of participation in the decision–making processes. A comprehensive historical analysis is far beyond this thesis,

however it is necessary to find out and evaluate the historical and conceptual roots of BIAs in Lithuania since it is commonly agreed that the national environment for the performance of BIAs does not lose its importance even in the era of economic globalisation.

Furthermore, it can also be argued that the true functioning of the organised business interest groups (also other social interest groups) was considerably delayed due to the slow formulation of the legal framework in the country. Lukošaitis (2004, 179–212) presumes that the majority of legal acts regulating the activities of interest groups were delayed without well–founded reasons. It could be assumed that the perceptible beginning of the process was in 1988 and, later, in 1989, we witnessed the appearance of the law which altered articles No. 6–7 of the Constitution of the Soviet Republic of Lithuania and preconditioned the legitimation of previously established political and social organisations. Besides, the green light has been given to the formation and functioning of other professional, economic, and other interest organisations.

The Law of Political Parties of the Republic of Lithuania adopted in 1990, unfortunately, did not regulate a clear separation between political and social organisations, which is assumed to be a traditional flaw of the majority of the post–communist regime countries (ibid.). Moreover, the law regulating the functioning of social organisations was not adopted. 'Social–like' political organisations and 'political party–like' social organisations performed the functions of political organisations, and this legal duality led to the situation in which until 1995 there were 20 registered political parties, 20 political social movements and 10 political social organisations (Lukošaitis 2004).

Continuing this discussion, attention is driven to the Constitution, adopted in 1992, which distinguished between the status of political parties and the status of social organisations. Article 35 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania (1992) says that citizens are guaranteed the right to freely form societies, political parties and associations and that no one should be compelled to belong to any society, political party, or association. Therefore, the Constitution legalised the integration of social organisations into the political realm. Following the articles of the Constitution, 1994 saw the modification and supplement of the Law on Political Parties which ensured the separation of political parties and political organisations from social organisations. Moreover, in 1995, the Legal Act on Social Organisations was adopted. The latter defined social organisations as voluntary gatherings (such as unions, associations, funds, etc.) of individuals formed with the aim to meet and implement individuals' needs and objectives. In 1995 all previously established organisations were asked to re–register their status once again, and to clearly choose between having social or political status. The adoption of the mentioned legal act is regarded as a major undertaking, that finally drew a clear separation line between political and social organisations.

Finally, the adoption of the Law of Associations in 1996 marked the completion of the legal framework for the functioning of interest groups. According to the definition provided in the Law, an association is a voluntary gathering of physical or legal individuals whose competences include the performance of economic, so-

cial, cultural, educational, scientific, etc. tasks and functions defined by the members of the association. The Law also provided the possibility for the association itself to join other union or confederations (ibid.).

The only gap in the legal framework could be named the prolonged absence of any law regulating lobbying activities until 2001. The project of the legal act regulating lobbying activities was introduced for public consultation in 1997. However, it was adopted only in 2000 and came into force in 2001. According to the Law, lobbying activities are defined as paid or not paid actions performed by physical or legal persons who act in accordance with their client's will that can include the requirement to influence certain legal acts and lead to the modification, supplementation, withdrawal, initiation or objection of certain legal acts. The person performing the lobbying activities should be enrolled in the official list of lobbyists (Law on Lobbying… 2003). The mentioned Law also regulates that lobbying activities can by no means go against the interests of the state or society. Much controversy and discussions have been gathered around the Law on Lobbying Activities, starting with the initial doubts whether it was necessary at all (Andrikienė 2002). It should be emphasised that at this moment, only 23 lobbyists are registered according to the Law on Lobbying (2003) and according to the declarations of lobbying activities of 2008, even 14 registered lobbyists out of 20 did not perform any lobbying activity (Report on Lobbying 2008).

The establishment of BIAs in Lithuania took longer and was not that smooth, compared to other organised interest groups in Lithuania. Even today the number of BIAs is quite low in Lithuania. In addition, some practical issues are encountered which prove to be very disadvantageous. There is no single authorative data base or source which provides a complete list of Lithuanian BIAs. According to the Law on Associations (2004), an association can be established by able natural persons (not younger than 18 years old) and/or legal persons by contracting. The minimal number of founders to establish an association in Lithuania is three. The law preconditions the environment in which all possible associations are "melted into one pot" and all official information coming from the state's statistical bodies provide information on associations that in reality comprise a huge variety of organisations that are involved in different activities led by different content and motivations. To cite a statistical example, according to the official statistics in 2010, there are 13 950 associations registered and 7 957 of them were considered to be in operation (Report on Registered Legal Entities 2010). The only way at present to find the number of Lithuanian BIAs is to view the whole body of registered associations in order to pick out the BIAs. This method has been adopted to perform the survey in the context of the thesis.

It is important to note that BIAs' were not stable at its initial stage in Lithuania. Business organisations were frequently replaced by one another and it can be presumed that the behaviour of BIAs was fragmented and hindered considerably. Previously established BIAs, such as the Union of Lithuanian Businesspeople, the Congress of Property Security, and the Lithuanian Alliance of Private Capital are no longer in operation today. For a complete transformational landscape of the development of Lithuanian BIAs, see Figure 6 below.

It can also be seen in Figure 6 that the particularly sophisticated development process of Lithuanian BIAs has been detected in the case of uniting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) into BIAs. Lukošaitis (2004, p. 197) discusses that this transformation period was marked with several common BIAs features that can be characterised as follows:

- Formation of public opinion on businesspeople;
- Interest representation in general; and
- Choice of political partner for cooperation (the Alliance of Private Capital, among its members–partners accepted one political party – the Lithuanian Liberal Union).

While looking at historical development and examples like the one mentioned above, it can be assumed that political and business environments were more closely interrelated than they should have been, and this apparently had a significant impact upon Lithuanian BIAs. One more interesting fact related to the above assumption is that those individuals who were chosen to be leaders of BIAs later – with small exceptions – became or are presently active in Lithuania's political life: Ms. K. Prunskienė later became the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania; Mr. A. Butkevičius was later elected (and is at present) a member of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania; and Mr. V. Uspaskich, initially a businessman, later established the Labour party in Lithuania, won elections, became the Minister of Economy, was a member of the Parliament, and is at the moment an elected member of the European Parliament for the period 2009–2014. These examples might bring one to assume that these personalities, or leaders of BIAs, reflected the general atmosphere of business and politics still being very close to each other. Besides, it should also be considered that these figures are politicians today, and that such a situation presumes the possible existence of various channels and links of influence.

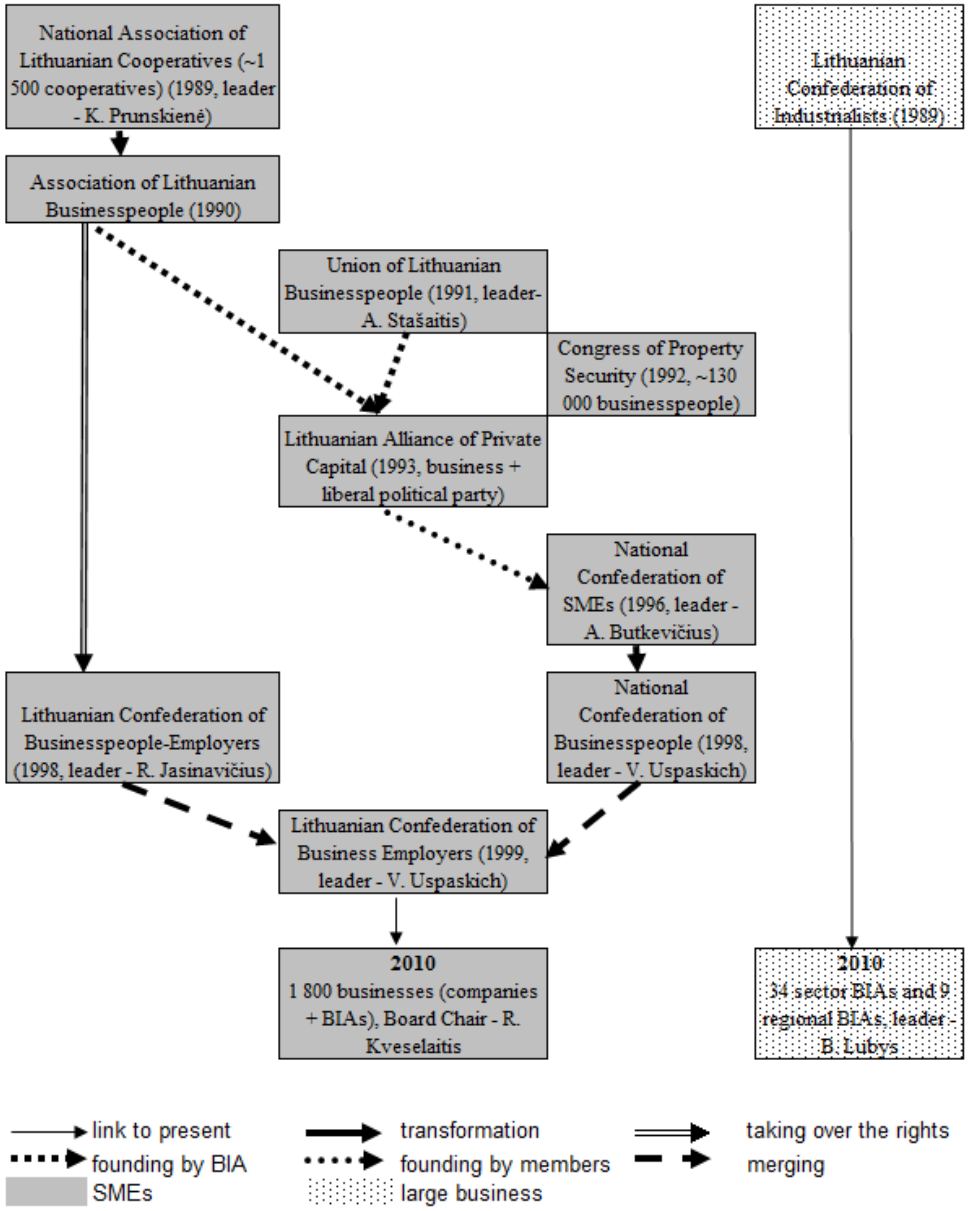


Figure 6 Transformation of Lithuanian BIAs[37]

The above figure also shows the way in which the representational organisations of small and medium businesses established themselves, and how this process is marked by sharp waves of establishing, reforming, cancelling and once again

[37] Source: adapted from Lukošaitis 2004, Krupavičius 1999.

founding a new BIA. It could hardly be stated that each change brought in a value–added factor into such a development. However, starting in a rather hostile environment where political parties held an absolute monopoly over decisions, they had to demonstrate a certain degree of flexibility and adaptability in order to be the predecessors of the BIAs that are nowadays being invited to work with and have access to public decision makers. Large business did not undergo such a complicated transformation. Political and business elites agree that the Confederation of Industrialists has the most significant influence, not only in business but also in the political world in Lithuania.

The depicted developments assume that the Lithuanian business interest associations underwent a complicated period of changes and transformations especially characteristic to post–communist countries. As argued by Schmitter (1990), organised interest group structure is understood and acquired as interest group identity and autonomy in the changing environment. While summarising this development of Lithuanian BIAs, several major development stages can be distiguished. Formal legalisation of a new social, economic and political environment, which served as a proper surrounding for the appearance of interest groups, was followed by the formulation and socialisation of new interests that later on acquired the format of organisations or other organisational structures, which finally have been articulated through organised interest groups into society and politics. The analysis of the development of Lithuanian BIAs shows that other stages in the development of BIAs remain to be seen in the future.

3.2. BEHAVIOUR OF LITHUANIAN BUSINESS INTEREST ASSOCIATIONS

The business community is a highly organised segment of society, and at the same it is also a very complex sector (Moe 1980, p. 192). One of the distinguishing traits is that BIAs are so specialised, in fact, that individual enterprises often find it very important to belong to more than one BIA: on the one hand, belonging to specialised BIA might ensure the representation and protection of specialised business interests, on the other hand, belonging to a more general BIA might guarantee the representation and protection of the interests regarding the general business environment.

Traditionally, the behaviour of business interest associations is directed towards the contact with state institutions. This contact increases the policy makers' knowledge and expertise in certain areas and actors, so that they can help establish shared policy goals and norms, and can enhance the understanding of one another's position. Although contact does not mean that the course of events will surely change, or that access will surely lead to influence and may have an impact on certain policies, those BIAs that have frequent contact with policy–makers have better chances to exert some influence (Bouwen 2003, pp. 1–23). Knowledge and analysis of access and contact patterns let us identify the features of those business interests associations that are important players in the policy–making process as well

the criteria that state institutions apply when it comes to whether and whom to accept to take part in consultation in the policy–making process (ibid.). Various BIAs' characteristics result in different access patterns. Identified access patterns reveal the frequency of contacts, the approached state institution, level of interaction, etc.

The following chapters present the findings of the quantitative research of the Lithuanian BIAs that was performed in the period between 2007 and 2009. The survey pursued a double objective, while extracting reliable and solid empirical information on Lithuanian BIAs' behaviour, on the one hand, it included the information on BIAs' organisational mapping, functions, resources, etc. and, on the other hand, it made inquiries regarding the BIAs' patterns of affiliation and contact with state institutions at the national and European levels.

3.2.1. Lithuanian Business Interest Associations' Order and its Implications

This section aims at outlining the associational order – as it was learnt from the survey – and its implications prevailing within Lithuanian BIAs. The section also includes the data of BIAs' associational order indicators within the framework of the proposed model of Lithuanian business interest associations' behaviour, and statistically measures their impact upon the contact patterns of Lithuanian BIAs with national institutions (the Government, Parliament, municipalities and others) and EU institutions (the European Commission, European Parliament, Council of the EU and others).

The survey clearly indicates that Lithuanian landscape of BIAs is dominated by national (regarding territorial domain) and low–order[38] (regarding hierarchical domain) business interest associations. The majority, with their principal offices, are situated in the capital, Vilnius. Within the research population of BIAs, which consisted of 150 BIAs, 108 were national level BIAs and 42 – regional BIAs; 144 BIAs were low–order BIAs and 6 were high–order BIAs. However, no sharp dominance is identified comparing the sectoral domain: 83 BIAs represent one sector type and 67 BIAs are umbrella or cross–sectoral type BIAs. The relatively high number of national level BIAs in one country – especially regarding Lithuania's relatively small economic market – is an interesting finding because social science empirical research argues that, usually, there are only several national level BIAs in one country (Bouwen 2002). Certainly, this is not the case in Lithuania, and one can presume that the high number of national BIAs can preclude their relative weakness, because BIAs are not strongly united and rather scattered and fragmented, as well as being in competition with one another. Despite this presumption, following the survey results' statistical calculations[39] showed that being a na-

[38] BIAs granting membership only to companies are low–order BIAs, while the BIAs that grant membership to other BIAs (and sometimes companies) are high–order BIAs or peak BIAs (otherwise known as associations of associations, or confederations).

[39] Statistical significance level is identified when $p<0.05$ (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002, Puškorius 2004).

tional BIA leads to more contact with national state institutions, i.e., the Government and the Parliament. It is important to emphasise that national BIAs have less contact with municipalities. The latter is more frequently contacted by regional BIAs (see Table 5). Therefore, national BIAs, though numerous in Lithuania, still gain more access to state institutions, and it can be presumed that more general business issues are being represented by the Government and the Parliament, while Lithuanian municipalities that gain more contact with regional BIAs have more access to information from the more narrow areas of business and expertise knowledge. Yet being either a regional or a national BIAs does not have any impact upon contact patterns with the EU institutions at the European level (Table 6).

Table 5 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at national level with territorial domain[40]

Contacts with national institutions	Regional BIA (N = 30)	National BIA (N = 78)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*341*	*62.4*	556.5	***0.000***
Parliament	*39.2*	*60.4*	711.0	***0.002***
Municipalities	*80.6*	*44.5*	386.5	***0.000***

Table 6 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with territorial domain[41]

Contacts with EU institutions	Regional BIA (N = 6)	National BIA (N = 41)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	23.9	24.0	122.5	0.987
European Parliament	31.3	22.3	73.0	0.106
Council of the EU	22.8	23.6	115.5	0.863
Other European institutions	21.5	22.7	108.0	0.787

According to the official registrar, the majority of Lithuanian associations were established in the first years after the restoration of the independence of the

[40] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[41] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Republic of Lithuania, i.e., in 1990–1992. However, in the case of BIAs, the same cannot be said. The research shows that the establishment of BIAs is more or less divided equally throughout the years. Chaotic pluralism has been observed in the case of society organisation in post–Soviet countries (Palidauskaitė 1997), however, Lithuanian BIAs do not fall into the same category. Table 7 indicates that there can hardly be one date which can be called the boom of BIAs in Lithuania.

Table 7 Year of foundation of BIAs[42]

Year[43]	Frequency	Percent
1974	1	1
1989	5	5
1990	1	1
1991	9	8
1992	4	4
1993	5	5
1994	7	6
1995	8	7
1996	6	5
1997	6	5
1998	5	5
1999	9	8
2000	6	5
2001	5	5
2002	5	5
2003	8	7
2004	3	3
2005	4	4
2006	6	5
2007	5	5
2008	2	2
2009	1	1
Total	**111**	**100**

This is quite a surprising finding because its existence proves that the foundation of Lithuanian BIAs did not boom after the restoration of independence as it could be expected. Though it can be seen that 1991 saw the establishment of as many as 9 BIAs, a more or less regular number of BIAs tend to appear each year: 5 BIAs were founded in 1993, 7 in 1994, 8 in 1995, 6 in both 1996 and 1997, 5 in 1998, 9 in 1999, and so on. A more or less balanced number of BIAs appearing may indicate that the landscape of Lithuanian BIAs is not yet established and that new actors are constantly entering the arena. Although 2008 witnessed a decrease

[42] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[43] The survey was finished at the beginning of 2009, thus, the number of BIAs established in 2009 is not considered while discussing the regular tendencies in establishment of Lithuanian BIAs.

in this trend, the latter's date and its meaning needs to be analysed and observed further.

The age of a BIA can have a double impact. On the one hand, older BIAs are more experienced and skilled and thus more active and gain more contact with state institutions. On the other hand, older organisations are not flexible, are tied to the path of dependency, perform according to the old regime and are not innovative and, therefore, have less frequent contact with state institutions. All the surveyed BIAs were grouped into two groups: those established prior to 1998, and those after 1998. Statistical significance was reached in two cases at the national level (see Table 8). Lithuanian BIAs established prior to 1998 have more frequent contact with the Government and the Parliament, however, no statistically significant findings have been observed in the case of municipalities at the national level or with EU institutions (see Annex 4).

Table 8 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at national level with BIA's age[44]

Contacts with national institutions	BIA founded prior to 1998 (N = 56)	BIA founded after 1998 (N = 51)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*61.5*	*45.7*	1007.0	***0.008***
Parliament	*60.6*	*46.8*	1060.0	***0.021***
Municipalities	56.4	51.4	1294.0	0.399

Moreover, the majority of Lithuanian BIAs (82%) have up to 50 members and 18% of surveyed BIAs have more than 50 members (see Table 9). It is important to pay attention to the fact that the minimum number of members in any association (BIAs included) in Lithuania is three, according to legal regulations. The base of the three can consist of able natural persons (not younger than 18 years old) and/or legal persons (Law on Associations 2004). It was found that 1.8% of BIAs indicated having more than 150 members. It is important to note that Lithuanian business interest confederations (peak associations) are not distinguished from the whole body of the research population mainly due to one major argument: there are too few confederations in Lithuania and the thesis investigates the behaviour of all Lithuanian BIAs. Two confederations, namely, the Lithuanian Employers' Confederation and Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists are the two major confederations in the country that include other BIAs as their members, although according to the statutes of quite a number of BIAs, their membership can be granted to other BIAs too. For more on this, see the following chapters.

[44] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Table 9 Size of Lithuanian BIAs[45]

Number of BIAs' members	Frequency	Percent
1–10	30	27.0
11–20	23	20.7
21–30	12	10.8
31–50	26	23.4
51–70	8	7.2
71–90	4	3.6
91–110	3	2.7
111–130	3	2.7
131–150	0	0.0
More than 151	2	1.8
Total	**111**	**100**

The existing literature states that governments in democracies certainly prefer having contact with BIAs that encompass many other BIAs and companies, and represent a larger part of society (i.e., voters) or considerable share of the market, rather than being contacted by BIAs who are small and represent a small part of society or market players. Lithuanian BIAs were subdivided into two groups during the statistical calculations: those having up to 20 members and those with more than 20 members. The statistical calculations show that the distributions of observations differ significantly only on the national level, in terms of contact with the Government (see Table 10). The larger a BIA, the more possibilities it gains to have more frequent contact with the Government. The statistically significant findings have not been identified in the cases of the Parliament and municipalities. Similarly, in the example of the European level, no statistically significant[46] results can be seen (see Annex 4).

[45] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[46] The identification of the only significant case can be explained that the statistical significance was not identified due to the small number of items.

Table 10 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the national level with BIA's size[47]

Contacts with national institutions	Up to 20 members (N = 51)	More than 20 members (N = 56)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*46.2*	*61.1*	1028.0	***0.012***
Parliament	49.6	58.0	1205.5	0.163
Municipalities	49.4	58.2	1194.0	0.140

Furthermore, there are formal rules that distinguish certain types of social actors that are eligible to join a BIA from those who are excluded from such a possibility. According to Schmitter and Streeck (1999, p. 62), there seems to be several factors determining the units of membership of BIAs: the relationship of the interests represented to the companies as an organisation, and the structure of the organised sector. Usually Lithuanian BIAs grant membership to legal persons (e.g. companies), natural persons (e. g. entrepreneurs), other associations, or other professional groups. The membership density indicates the extent to which a BIA is able to recruit other potential members. Therefore, the organisational domain – regarding membership – in essence delimits the sectoral scope of BIA as it was earlier analysed. The sectoral scope can have a twofold effect on the access patterns to state institutions because it affects the range of issues BIAs deal with as well as the spectrum of interests it accommodates. On the one hand, a narrow sectoral scope or subsectoral domain results in a small number of members, keeps a homogenous nature of interests and, consequently, internal compromise is relatively easily reached and a BIA can act vigorously. However, a BIA with a narrow sectoral scope risks representing the interests of only a very small group of businesses and, therefore, becomes irrelevant to policy makers. To continue, a broad sectoral scope determines a high number of members of a BIA but makes the interests very heterogeneous, which leads to more difficulties to agree on a joint definition of joint objectives. Frequently as a way out from such a situation, a formulation of a comprehensive but too general position is reached, which is also not very relevant to decision makers. However, Schmitter and Streeck (1981) state that the decision makers prefer to be contacted by BIAs encompassing many companies and representing a larger sector of society.

The surveyed Lithuanian BIAs were asked to identify the actors to which they grant membership[48] (see Figure 7).

[47] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[48] BIAs were asked to whom they grant membership according to their statute, however, their answers do not necessarily reflect the real status of their actual members.

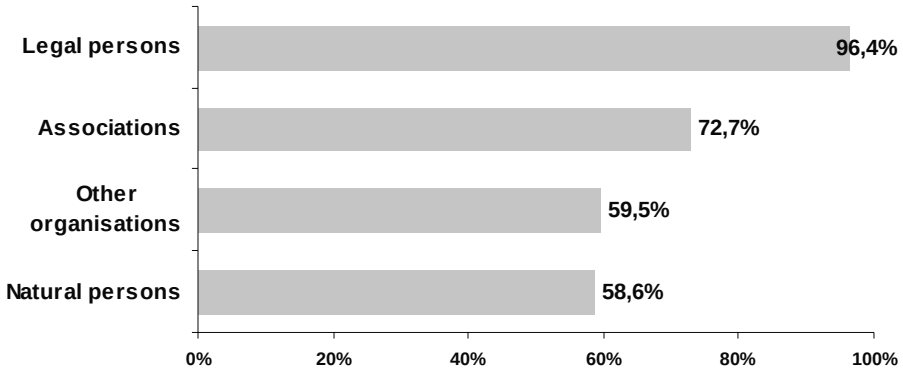


Figure 7 Lithuanian BIAs' membership scheme[49]

The quantitative research revealed that about 73% of Lithuanian BIAs grant membership to other associations. It can be presumed that they have the potential of being high–order BIAs which could affect interest representation activities in a positive way. However, a relatively large percentage of BIAs give membership to natural persons which presumably can also affect the activities of BIAs in the following manner: if a natural person who is granted membership is an influential figure in the electorate or community, the BIA can benefit from such a member considering interest representation, however, where a natural person does not officially represent any part of society and does not demonstrate influential behaviour of any kind, then a large number of low–profile natural members in the BIA can have a negative influence on the BIA's behaviour. About 59% of BIAs grant membership to natural persons.

The classification of the types of BIAs' members into legal and natural persons is very basic and formal. The analysis of Lithuanian BIAs indicated that there is additional classification of membership. Though there is some variation between different BIAs, for the most part, this classification is presented in Figure 8.

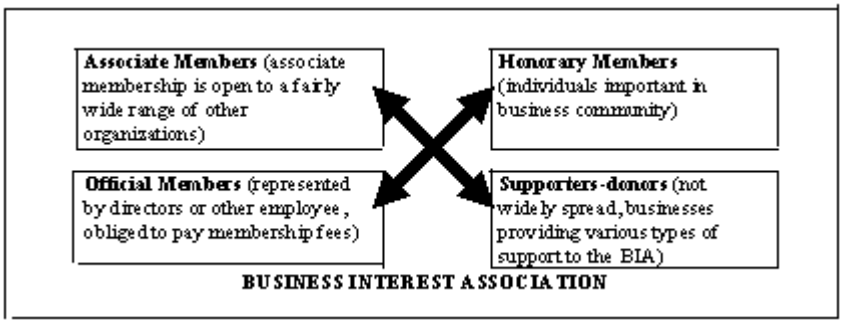


Figure 8 Classification of BIAs' membership[50]

[49] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Furthermore, depending on what kind of actors BIAs accept, they determine their position in a multi–layered associational system. On the one hand, BIAs that allow the membership of individual companies or entrepreneurs form the bottom layer and are called low–order BIAs. Such membership indicates quite a narrow domain and aggregate interests at a relatively low level. On the other hand, associations that grant membership to other BIAs locate themselves on a higher level in the landscape of all BIAs and are called high–order BIAs. The high–order BIAs might have more possibilities to access or even be invited by state institutions themselves.

To work out how the order system introduced above impacts upon the contact patterns with state institutions, the following steps were taken. The evaluation of how hierarchical characteristics affect the access of BIAs are divided into those BIAs that grant membership only to other companies (low–order BIAs) and the BIAs that grant membership to companies and other BIAs (high–order BIAs). Corresponding to the findings of the statistical calculation, no statistical significance level was identified, either at the national level or at the European level (Appendix 4 Table 3–4). The explanation could run as follows: during the empirical research, the BIAs were asked to identify who could potentially become a member of their association (as instructed by their internal rules, statutes, etc.). A large number of BIAs identified that they accept other BIAs as their members, however, it should be pointed out, that this possibility might only be theoretical. In reality, only a handful of Lithuanian BIAs include other BIAs as their members[51].

The assumption mentioned earlier in this chapter on the scattered nature of Lithuanian BIAs is only strengthened by the more detailed look at the sector(s) represented by Lithuanian BIAs. It has been identified that there is a certain concentration of BIAs in the pharmacy sector, i.e., four national BIAs are operating in the pharmacy sector in Lithuania: the BIA of Ethical Pharmacy, the BIA of Independent Pharmacy, the BIA of Pharmacy Trade Enterprises, and the BIA of Province Pharmacies. An even higher concentration is registered in the fisheries sector, where four national (the BIA of Fishery Business, the BIA of Aquaculture and Fishery Products Producers, the BIA of Fishery Products Producers, and the BIA of Fishery Enterprises 'Lampetra') and one regional fishery BIA (the BIA of Fishery of the Western Region of Lithuania) is functioning. One cannot draw a conclusion that the mission and aspirations of the previously listed BIAs are very similar but apparently, a stronger influence upon the state's decision–making process at the national and European level could be reached by more consolidated powers of similar BIAs in one country. The merging and formation of one peak BIA and pooling human and financial resources, etc. could bring more benefits for businesses engaged in the fisheries sector. To continue, there are four BIAs involved in the energy sector: the BIA of Hydro Energy, the BIA of Wind Energy, the BIA of Energy, and the BIA of Electricity Networks. There are also four BIAs dealing in the

[50] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[51] It was found at the initial stage of the reseach while making the list of Lithuanian BIAs that there are only six high–order BIAs in Lithuania.

tourism sector. One out of four BIAs dealing in this sector are of regional origin (the BIA of Neringa Tourism), others – at a national level engaged in rural tourism, and in tourism in Lithuania in general. This situation signals quite a disjointed system of BIAs, whereas in the case of a merger, one could assume that interests could be represented more effectively.

Further on, the concentration of BIAs is detected in the construction sector, where one finds three BIAs: the BIA of Construction Material Trade Enterprises, the BIA of Constructors, and the BIA of Construction Industry; in the timber sector there are four BIAs: the BIA of Timber House Producers, the BIA of Wooden House Producers, the BIA of Wood Trade, and the BIA of Western Lithuanian Wood Producers and Exporters, For the complete list of surveyed BIAs, see Annex 2.

The quantitative survey comprised of 80 national BIAs and 32 regional BIAs regarding the territorial domain; regarding the sectoral scope: 59 BIAs represented one sector and 53 represented more than one sector[52]. For the purposes of this research, five types of Lithuanian BIAs have been identified – considering the previously presented domain system – in Lithuania's business association environment:

- national one sector low–order BIAs;
- national umbrella high–order BIAs;
- national umbrella low–order BIAs;
- regional one sector low–order BIAs; and
- regional umbrella low–order BIAs.

Other classification groups that were not detected in the Lithuanian environment, yet do complete the classification scheme are:

- national one sector high–order BIAs;
- regional one sector high–order BIAs; and
- regional umbrella high–order BIAs.

Certainly this list is not complete and other types of classifications are possible. Kaminskas (2001, p. 78) applied a different approach and suggests we distinguish four types of BIAs in the classification. They are the following: (1) chamber of trade, industry and crafts. This group unites business enterprises according to their geographical distribution and defends their interests; (2) regional organisations. This group unites business enterprises, employers' organisations and businesspeople located in a certain region; (3) sector associations. This group unites business enterprises of one certain sector; (4) umbrella organisations. This group unites enterprises and employers' organisations despite their sector.

The current section indicates that with politics and society still in flux, a stable associational order in Lithuania, regarding BIAs, has yet to emerge. The overall system of Lithuanian BIAs cannot be called fully complete and stable as the survey indicates that a number of Lithuanian BIAs are still being established and the existing network is showing signs of fragmentation: Lithuanian business interest associations indicate the dominance of relatively small in membership national level associations. This is not an absolutely new phenomenon. For example, the Dutch

[52] These numbers represent the BIAs that have actually been surveyed during the empirical research.

and German associational systems were similarly characterised by a large number of BIAs before 1990 (Jacobi et al. 1992). Numerous BIAs with relatively low numbers of members can be regarded as a consequence of rather weak Lithuanian labour unions. Strengthening of the latter could lead to closer forms of cooperation between BIAs and mergers. Furthermore, in a political system in which European integration processes are becoming more important, the pooling of resources that are necessary to represent members' interests at the national and European levels is becoming more important too. In addition to legal regulations allowing natural persons to form BIAs, this also has the effect of inceasing the number of BIAs. The decision to establish an association is rational because the associative actions are encouraged by various funds, including European funds, which is an attractive stimulus for separate entrepreneurs and businesses. Additionally, economic instability and the 'chaos' accompanying market transition forms a BIAs 'market' that is represented by unconventionally high numbers of BIAs existing in a single sector. Besides, though it has been expected that the evolution of Lithuania as an independent state and market transition would break up the nature of the post–Soviet tradition, the following empirical findings indicate relatively weak manifestations of a number of certain characteristics of Lithuanian BIAs. The following section of the thesis leads to the analysis of the relevant organisational indicators of Lithuanian BIAs.

3.2.2. Characteristics of Lithuanian Business Interest Associations and their Behaviour Patterns

The access approach is based on the demand and supply of access goods (Bouwen 2002, 2002a). Bouwen applied the access approach to evaluate contact patterns between different types of actors, such as private companies, national BIAs and European BIAs and consultants with institutions at the European level (ibid.). Lithuanian BIAs have access to state institutions at the national level or European institutions, thus, it is indispensable to analyse what characteristics precondition a BIA's access to state institutions at the national and European levels. To this end, the following chapter integrates the data of organisational and sectoral indicators within the framework of the suggested model, and statistically measures the impact of the organisational and sectoral characteristics upon the frequency of contact of Lithuanian BIAs with national institutions (the Government, Parliament, municipalities, and others) and EU institutions (the European Commission, European Parliament, Council of the EU, and others).

3.2.2.1. Organisational Domain and Interrelations with Decision–Makers

A business interest association is a very complex social structure in its organisational and governance structure. Authors such as Siebart and Reichard (2002)

acknowledge that the organisational structure and governance have a significant influence upon the behaviour of non–governmental organisations.

In general, an organisational form is a blueprint for organisational action, for transforming inputs into output. BIAs do not vary widely in their major mission as further analysis clearly shows, however, the size of the organisational mechanism, the stage in the organisational life cycle and the field of action differ. Since each BIA, in addition to its major mission, has some specific missions, the organisational structure is inevitably influenced by both: the principal and specific missions. Hannan and Freeman (1977) maintain that the organisational blueprint can usually be inferred by examining:

- the formal structure of the organisation and written rules of operation;
- the patterns of activity within the organisation, i.e., what actually gets done and by whom; and
- the normative order, i.e., the methods of organisation that are defined as right and proper by both members and relevant sectors of the environment.

The basic features and competencies of the organisational structure of Lithuanian BIAs are defined by the Law on Associations (2004); additional competencies are defined differently in the statutes of each BIA.

One of the major governance components is a BIA's general meeting of members (assembly) which is authorised to:

- amend the statute of the BIA;
- appoint or elect and recall members of the management bodies, or members of other collegiate bodies;
- fix the amount of initial contributions of members of the association and the amount of membership fees, and the procedure for paying them;
- approve annual reports of the association;
- make decisions regarding restructuring or termination (reorganisation or liquidation) of the association; etc. (Law on Associations 2004)

All members of an association are entitled to a decisive vote in a general meeting of members. One member is entitled to one vote in a general meeting of members.

Furthermore, the second important governance body of a BIA is the management body. It is a collegiate body that:

- acts in the name of an association in the presence of relations with other persons;
- employs and dismisses BIA's employees, and concludes employment contracts with them;
- prepares and presents to a general meeting of members a report on the activities of the association;
- announces or organises the dissemination of public information, etc. (ibid).

The management body also is entitled to make decisions on the establishment of branches and representative offices, and termination of activities thereof, and the approval of their regulations.

The sole management body of a BIA is the president. A BIA's president is usually elected at the assembly of the general meeting of the BIA. In most cases the

president should be the representative of one of the BIA's member–companies, usually a top position manager, although, some BIAs hire professional managers. The basic BIA's president's functions include:

- representation of the BIA at the highest political level at national institutions, international organisations;
- coordination of the work of the presidium or management board;
- confirmation of the BIA's annual strategy;
- recommendation to establish the BIA's committees for certain tasks or area coordination;
- having the right to have vice–presidents to head committees and replace the president in his/her absence, etc. (ibid.).

The internal governance of BIAs can be characterised by the term 'management of diversity' (Schmitter and Streeck 1999, p. 15). Management of diversity centers on the problematic issue of reconciling conflicts stemming from the internal homogeneity or internal heterogeneity. In the first case, the more homogeneous a BIA is, regarding its members, the stronger the competition among its members in the market. Correspondingly, the more heterogeneous a BIA is, the greater the diversity of interests.

The Figure 9 below presents the general structure of Lithuanian business interest associations. The better business interest association is organised, the more developed organisational structure it possesses. However, the majority of the Lithuanian business interest associations limit their organisational structures to the basic which includes the general assembly of BIA's members and management body (sole/collegiate).

The principal task of the administration/executive section is to assist the managing board and the president, however, it should be noted that it is important that the executive section should not be pre–occupied with preparing the board's meetings, etc. but also have the time and resources to execute other important functions, for example, conduct external and internal communication, international relations, etc. In order to build and maintain an effective partnership between the executive branch and the board, it is important to concentrate on educating and developing the board and mentoring the head of the executive section, as well as fostering mutual understanding and a professional partnership. The committees established under the supervision of the managing board and the president are responsible for implementation of activities related to the behaviour of BIA: service provision for the BIA;s members, interest representation strategies building, monitoring the political agenda, etc.

The figure below shows that there is quite a great variety in the governance structures of Lithuanian BIAs, however, the dominant pattern of governance among Lithuanian BIAs consists of a general assembly, management board, executive director or president, and a financial unit. As it will be reflected further in the research, this situation is mainly explained by rather limited resources of the Lithuanian BIAs. The limited budget allows BIA having only a president and a financial officer. And it is apparent that this situation negatively influences the behaviour of BIAs.

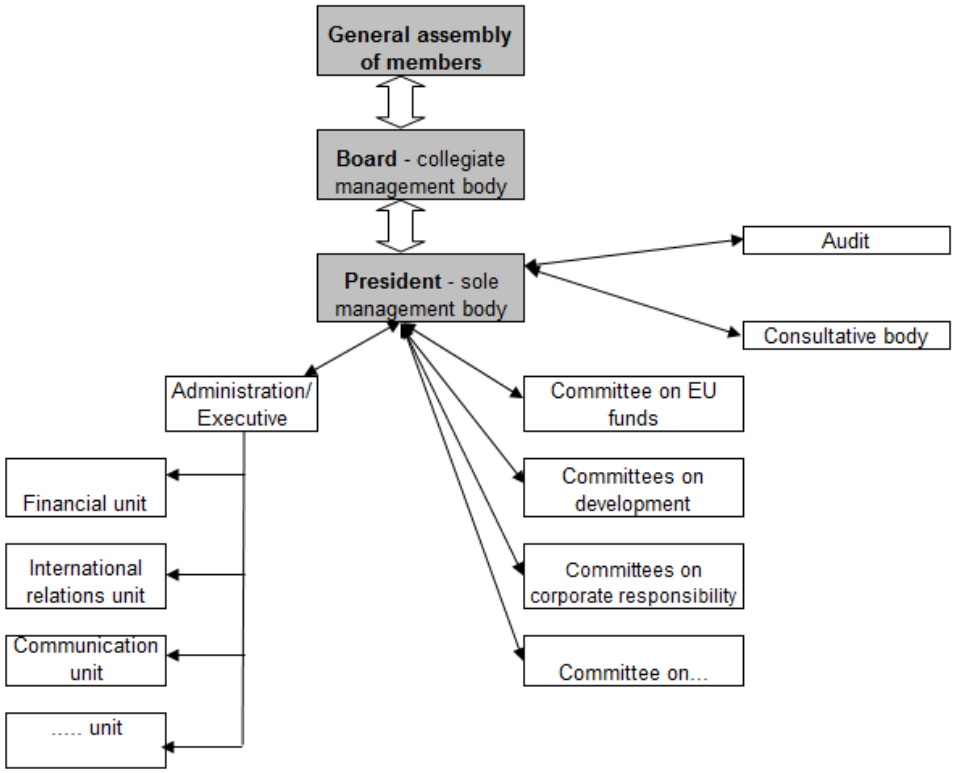


Figure 9 BIAs' organisational structure[53]

A BIA's president usually has tenure of between 4–5 years, with the opportunity to serve for another term, however, the term of the managing board is usually not defined in the statutes. There can be a presumption that the terms of the members of the managing board all end at the same time; however, it is widely discussed in the literature that all management board members' terms should never end at the same time (a rotation system should be initiated) so that continuation of the implementation of the BIA's priorities and strategy could be ensured, rather than be unnecessarily interrupted. The frequency of board meetings usually ranges between 3–4 times per year to once a week. Higher frequency is possible in cases of emergencies, special circumstances, etc. The decision regarding the board's size depends upon different aspects, for example, the required functions, number of committees, and diversity of BIA's interests.

Siebart and Reichard (2002) argue that a BIA's basic management task is to build harmony between its three main functions: service provision, advocacy or intermediation of interests, and community building. Above mentioned scholars find

[53] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

that in the post–Soviet countries, the operational capacities of the associations as service providers are rather low. Yet their community–building role is more important. On the contrary, in Western European countries, the association's role as a service provider is well established; however, it has lost its community–building capacity. However, the thesis research indicates that Lithuania's case is not a typical example, as BIAs as service providers are quite well established but the fragmentation depicted in the previous section indicates that business community–building is weak. Fragmented structures usually afford more actors to perform access; however, impact is limited, whereas centralised structures create difficulties of access but tend to result in high policy impact (Risse–Kappen 1995). Regarding contact patterns, the findings of the quantitative research prove that 96% of the surveyed Lithuanian BIAs have contact with national decision–makers; and 42% of the BIAs indicated that they have contact with European Union institutions. These finding are examined further in the following paragraphs.

The research distinguished three major institutions, or targets of BIAs at the national level. They are the following: the Government, the Parliament, and municipalities. Each target is subdivided into smaller sections separating the administrative level from the political one in the cases of the Government and municipalities; and distinguishing political parties, members of Parliament and committees in the context of the national Parliament. Figure 10 presents Lithuanian BIAs' contact patterns with national decision–makers.

According to the findings, about 14% of all the surveyed BIAs have contact with decision– makers at national level once a week. About 20% of BIAs have contact with national state authorities once a month; 17% of respondents have contact with Government, Parliament and municipalities once in three months; 13% – once in six months; 12% – once a year. From the results it could be concluded that Lithuanian BIAs do not rest on the established one contact pattern. The latter varies from one BIA to another. This can be explained as being dependent on a BIA's characteristics, policy context, the issues being represented in political agenda, etc. Indeed, many BIAs pointed out that contact with state institutions depended upon the issue discussed. The findings reveal that most of the efforts are directed towards the Government's administrative level, i.e., heads of ministerial departments, advisers to ministers, etc. Regarding the national Parliament, the members of Parliament experience the most contact (in comparison to committees and political parties) from Lithuanian BIAs. Considering the municipality level, the difference between contact on the administrative level and the political level is very insignificant: the latter is contacted slightly more frequently than the former. The level of the President's office is mentioned once in the survey in the category of other contacted institutions.

According to Steen's (1997) research on the business environment in the Baltic States, Lithuanian business leaders have much less contact with the political elite, compared to entrepreneurs in Estonia or Latvia. According to Steen, for example, only 4% of businesspeople have weekly contact with political leaders in Lithuania, meanwhile in Estonia and Latvia this figure is 19% and 21% respectively. There is much more contact with administrative units in all three Baltic

countries: 27%, 31% and 35% respectively. However, the Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists, it appears, can be considered an exception to this rule, because the organisation is not only in contact, but also frequently openly influences the decision–making political structures. This was recognised on several occasions and by several ruling majorities (Lukošaitis 2004). Before the 1996 elections to the national Parliament, the Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists set a precedent by signing a Memorandum of Cooperation with political parties, encouraging other business interests associations to also more actively cooperate with state institutions and to represent their interests more actively (ibid.).

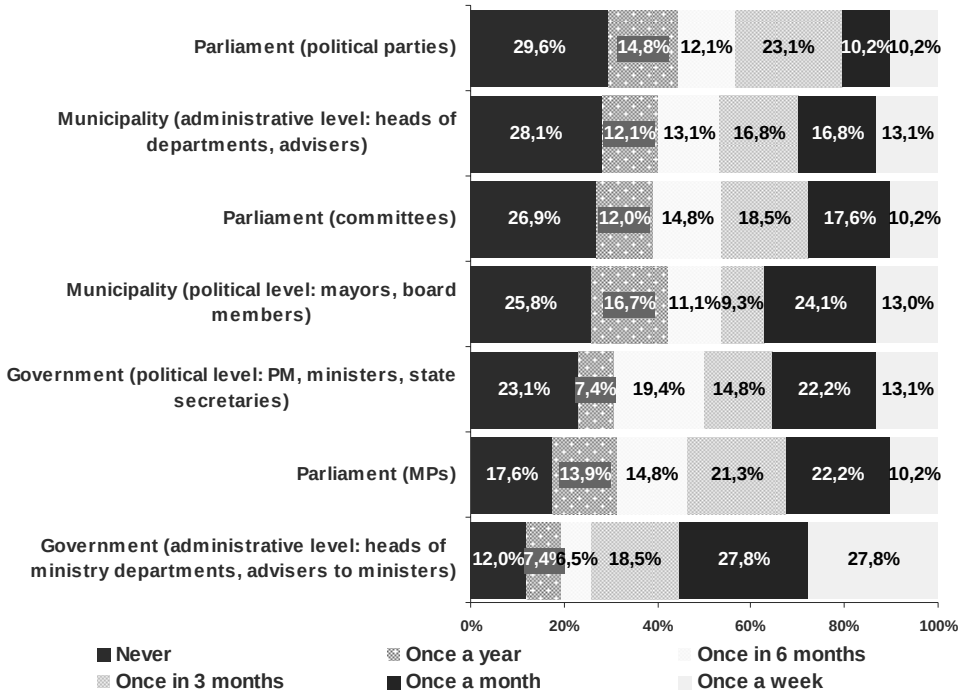


Figure 10 BIAs' contact patterns with national state institutions[54]

Lithuanian BIAs were examined to find which policy process stage was preferred at the national and European levels. Generally, the policy process can be broken down into five stages (Parsons 2001):

- problem definition;
- agenda setting;
- policy formulation;
- implementation;
- termination.

[54] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

For the purpose of the thesis, the three 'middle' phases of the policy cycle are considered and the following analysis is limited to agenda setting, policy formulation and implementation. Agenda setting refers to the phase where policy objectives are identified. The latter often serve as the basis of the policy agenda. Usually, it is very difficult to find the exact place where to draw the line between the agenda setting phase and the policy formulation phase. The policy formulation phase might also include policy objectives, and in this phase, policy instruments are designed to reach the previously defined objectives. During the policy formulation stage, concrete proposals are introduced by the executives, i.e., the Government at the national level and the European Commission at the European level, and later on these proposals are finally legitimised through an official decision by the legislative representatives, i.e. the Parliament at the national level and Council of the EU and the European Parliament at the European level. Traditionally, the agenda setting phase involves all kinds of political and social actors, whereas, the policy formulation stage is limited to state institutions and actors in the political and administrative realms. However, this does not mean that social players do not have any possibility to access decision–makers during this stage.

Finally, the implementation phase at the national level is performed by the Government. In the European context, the implementation stage also includes a final step where the adopted legal acts are transposed into national law, where, in the case of, for example, directives, there is space left for member states to choose the instruments for the defined result to be achieved.

For a long time in Lithuania there was an unclear framework for political processes. As a result, many interest groups were confused about the momentum and did not know where to step in with the representation of business interests. An immature political culture, to some extent, preconditioned the use of illegal methods and 'old favours', etc. Interest intermediation is closely connected to the lack of transparency in Lithuania (Makaraitytė 2001). BIAs did not have many opportunities to put forward their proposals for public discussion because all the sources were exploited by the state authority bodies. Only with the modification of the Statute of the Parliament in 2000 could BIAs and other interest groups legally participate in public hearings and express their positions on the issues being discussed. However, it should be noted that some interest organisations apply this method rather vaguely (Lukošaitis 2004). It is also argued that the interest representation system is still under development in Lithuania. As a result, the 'golden middle' path does not exist between state authority bodies and BIAs. There are no clear or pre–set 'channels of influence' (ibid.). In addition, the rather frequent reshuflles in the Government could precondition more favourable conditions and access to different, separate BIAs (Lukošaitis 2004).

Lithuanian BIAs demonstrate quite different approaches towards the decision–making stages at the national level, which is most probably a more familiar environment than the decision–making stages at the European level (see Figure 11). The majority of BIAs come in with their interests at the policy formulation stage, in the form of hearings at the national Parliament. A slightly smaller group of BIAs participate in the political agenda preparation stage with their interest representa-

tion. Obviously, the national political decision scheme is well perceived by BIAs, however, quite a number of BIAs still seek to represent their interests at the final implementation stage.

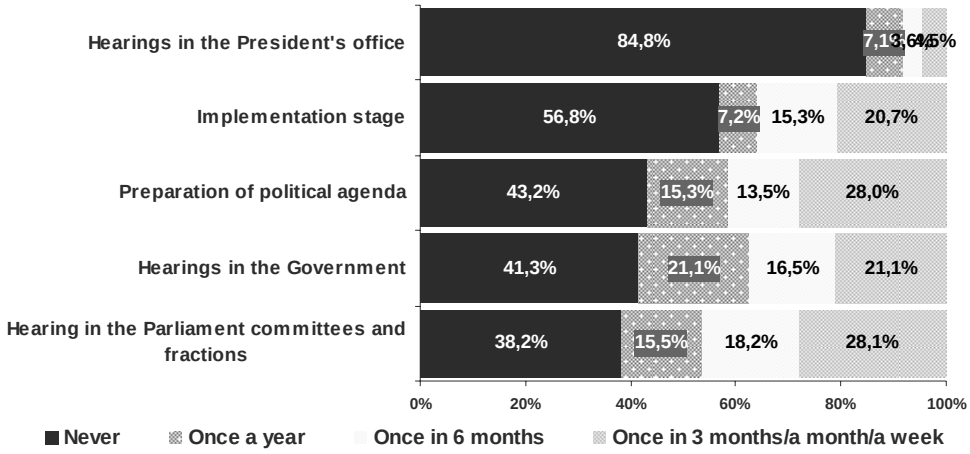


Figure 11 BIAs' interest representation at different decision–making stages at the national level[55]

As it was mentioned earlier, 42% of Lithuanian BIAs confirmed that they had contact with EU institutions. These BIAs were asked to identify the EU institutions and the level of the institutions they contact (see Figure 12). Four institutions were identified in the EU context: the European Commission (administrative level: directors general, heads of the units, advisors; and political level: commissioners, their cabinets), the European Parliament (the secretariat; members of the European Parliament and their assistants; committees and chairpersons); the Council of the EU (the secretariat general; COREPER, work groups; political level: ministers) and other European institutions and agencies.

The research results illustrate that Lithuanian BIAs have most contact with the European Paliament at the level of the Members of the Parliament and their assistants and the administrative level of the European Commission. On the contrary, the secretariat general of the Council of the EU is least frequently contacted by Lithuanian BIAs. The secretariat and committees/chairpersons of the European Parliament are equally contacted by Lithuanian BIAs on a different scale of frequency. The most popular frequency pattern at which Lithuanian BIAs contact European Union institutions is once a year. Obviously, this frequency can hardly be stated to be the provide sought effect, on the other hand, it demonstrates the tendency that a certain percentage of Lithuanian BIAs do not confine their activities towards staying and functioning strictly within the national level. The questions of

[55] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

what the benefits of such rare contacts are and what are the flaws could be debated further.

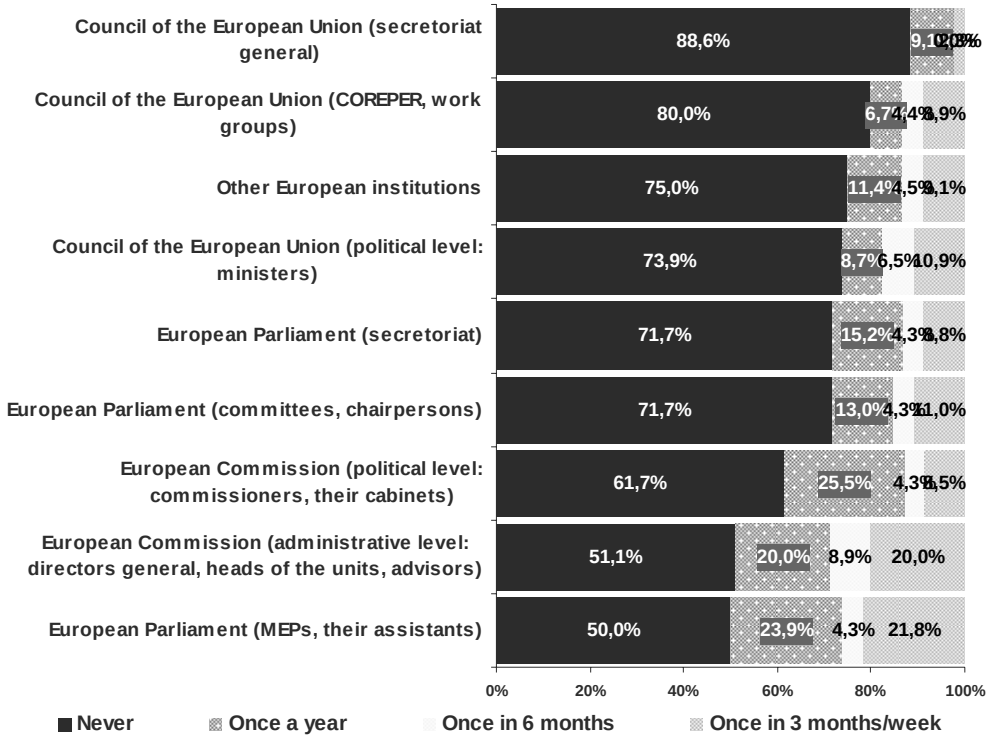


Figure 12 BIAs' contact patterns with EU institutions[56]

The research results illustrate that Lithuanian BIAs have most contact with the European Paliament at the level of the Members of the Parliament and their assistants and the administrative level of the European Commission. On the contrary, the secretariat general of the Council of the EU is least frequently contacted by Lithuanian BIAs. The secretariat and committees/chairpersons of the European Parliament are equally contacted by Lithuanian BIAs on a different scale of frequency. The most popular frequency at which Lithuanian BIAs contact European Union institutions is once a year. Obviously, this frequency can hardly be stated to be the most effective, on the other hand, it demonstrates the tendency that a certain percentage of Lithuanian BIAs do not confine their activities towards staying and functioning strictly within the national level. The questions of what the benefits of such rare contacts are and what are the flaws could be debated further.

The political system of the EU has several points where it is open to organised interests. For comparison, Figure 13 reports the access of different business actors

[56] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

to EU institutions. From a comparative perspective, individual companies have a higher degree of access to the EC (34%) and the CoEU (37%) than to the EP (20%). National BIAs have a proportionally higher degree of access to the CoEU (43%) than to the EP (37%) and the EC (21%). Additionally, the data in the graph shows that European BIAs have a much higher degree of access to the EP (38%) and the EC (43%) than to the CoEU (11%). Finally, consultants have a very low degree of access to EU institutions (EP – 5%; EC – 2% and CoEU – 9%). The empirical investigation depicts clearly that the different organisational forms of business interests have unequal access to EU institutions[57]. In other words, different forms participate unequally in the EU decision–making process (Bouwen 2003, pp. 12–13).

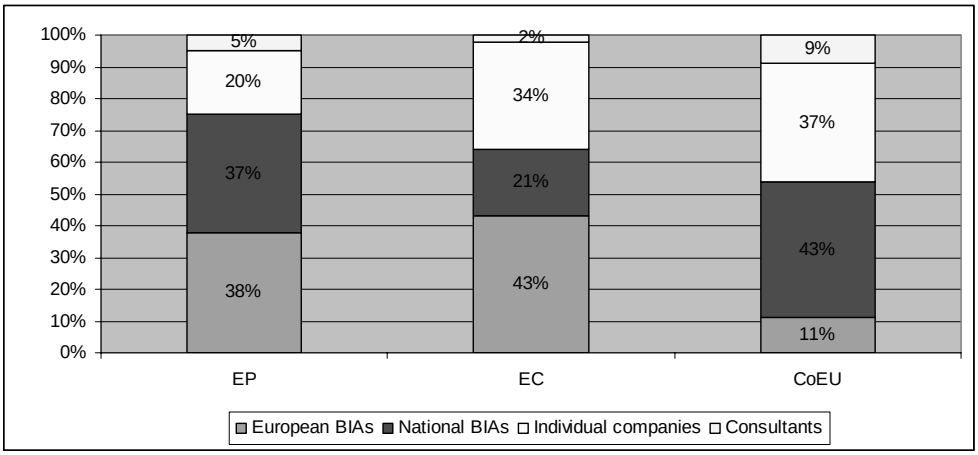


Figure 13 Business actors' access patterns at the EU institutions[58]

Interestingly, Lithuanian BIAs prefer the EP for access (about 50%), then the EC (about 45%) and only about 23% choose to access the CoEU to exert some influence. This finding could be explained in two ways: that the BIAs accessing the CoEU identified their answers regarding contact with the national government and did not mark anything in the case of the CoEU, or that Lithuanian BIAs do not really contact the CoEU, though the latter as we could see is open for national BIAs. Regarding the EC, according to Tenbücken (2002, p. 126) and McLaughlin and Greenwood (1995), there are four main reasons why national BIAs are not welcome in the EC:

- the EC prefers collective bodies to build a large basis of consent;
- the EC wants to act 'even–handedly' by not favouring some BIAs over others;

[57] Bouwen (2003) based his research on interviews with EU officials and politicians working for the EP, EC and the CoEU.
[58] Source: adapted from Bouwen 2003, p. 13.

• the EC appreciates sectoral self–regulation.

As was the case at the national level that was mentioned in this chapter too, the effectiveness of contact with state institutions also depends on the decision–making stages at which BIAs perform their interest representation. Lithuanian BIAs were asked to clarify at which decision–making stage they represent their interests at the European Union level (see Figure 14). The results clearly showed that, unfortunately, the majority of Lithuanian BIAs represent their interests at the European level during the implementation stage of the legal act – the stage that actually takes place at the national level. This stage is least important, as the possibility to change the course of events is minimal or altogether absent. The same number of Lithuanian BIAs represent their interests at the transposition of the legal act into the national legal environment stage and at the European Commission stage while it prepares the proposal. The smallest group of BIAs engage in interest representation at the preparation of the political agenda stage, which is supposed to be a very favourable spot for various kinds of interest representation. It could be concluded that Lithuanian BIAs are not very aware of the possibilities of where to 'jump into' the decision–making process at the EU level.

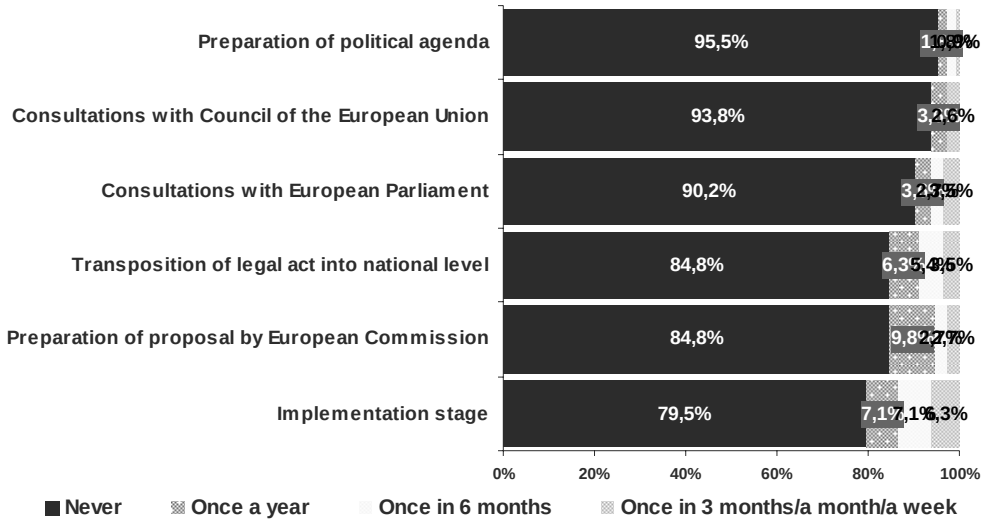


Figure 14 BIAs' interest representation at different decision–making stages at the EU level[59]

In the context of BIAs' behaviour a very important role is given to information as an essential resource. In many cases, BIAs only contact state institutions with inquiries for information on certain issues or developments. The statistical method

[59] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

of multidimensional scaling[60] (MDS) integrated two dimensions: the frequency of contact with state authorities at the national and EU level and the frequency of provision of information under request (see Figure 15).

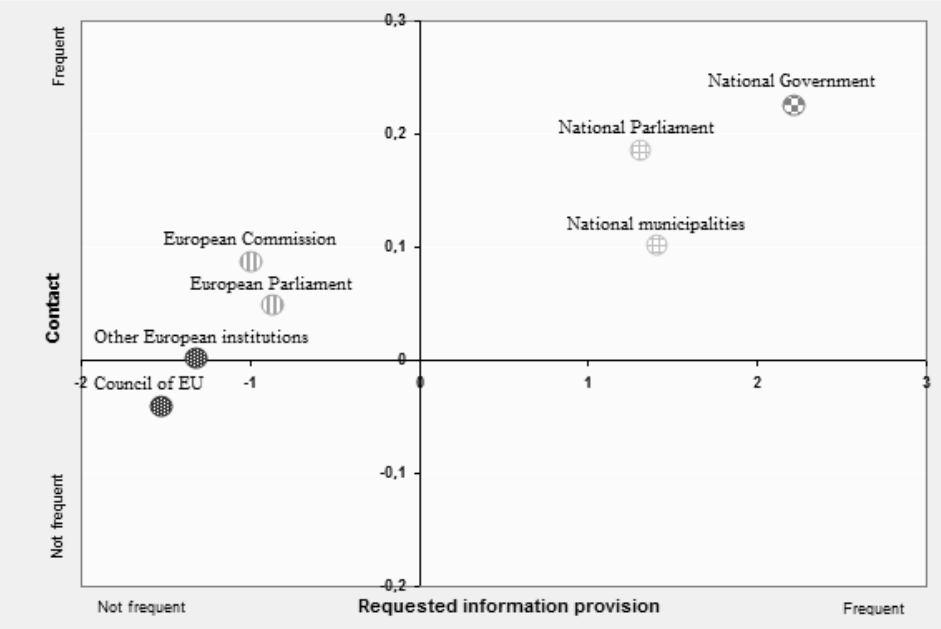


Figure 15 Map of national and EU institutions regarding contact and requested information provision[61]

The picture depicts a 'map' of national and European institutions in relation to the two dimensions: frequency[62] of contact with state authorities, and provision of information under request. The distribution of four major categories of institutions according to the two dimensions can be seen in the map. The national Government belongs to the first category, as it demonstrates the most frequent occurrence according to both dimensions. Lithuanian BIAs most frequently contact the national Lithuanian Government and the latter provides the requested information most frequently, compared to other institutions. The national Parliament and national municipalities form the second major group, though it is apparent that the national Parliament is contacted by BIAs much more frequently than the national munici-

[60] Multidimensional scaling is a set of related statistical techniques often used in information visualization for exploring similarities or dissimilarities in data (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

[61] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[62] Only the 'most often' frequencies of once a week/month/three months in both cases (national and European institutions) in both dimensions were taken into consideration, because it is assumed that only frequent contacts can result in real access and impact.

palities, although the latter slightly overtakes the national Parliament in the dimension of frequency of provision of information under request. European institutions form the third and fourth groupings. The European Commission demonstrates more frequent contact, however, the European Parliament provides requested information to BIAs more frequently. The last group is formed by the Council of the EU and other European institutions. The latter out–distances the Council of the EU on both dimensions. Lithuanian BIAs contact the Council of the EU the least and receive requested information from it the least often as well.

The previous sections of the doctoral thesis argue that a BIA's organisational characteristics of size, geographical domain, age and membership are important indicators to analyse because they make impact upon the behaviour of the Lithuanian business interest associations. However, the dominant minimal organisational setup of Lithuanian BIAs can hardly ensure them a strong positioning in the associational landscape or effective behaviour while accessing state institutions at the national and European levels. The research results confirm that for many Lithuanian business interests associations, national contacts remain an important route to express interests and they the associations are not enough professionalized for the European Union level.

3.2.2.2. Resources Domain and Interrelations with Decision–Makers

The second important organisational feature of the behaviour of the Lithuanian interest associations, already mentioned, is the domain of the resources at the disposal of BIAs. To ensure their survival and maintenance, BIAs need a more or less stable supply of resources from their members and their environment. BIAs, as voluntary organisations, draw on the time, money, information, and efforts of their members.

Literature on research of interest representation stresses that to extract resources from their members, BIAs offer them different incentives[63]. Figure 16 depicts the structure of the financial resources that form the budget of Lithuanian BIAs. The majority of BIAs (67%) indicate that the biggest share of their budget (76–100%) comes from membership fees; the second largest source of BIAs is earnings from charged services, however, as many as about 70% of BIAs do not receive any financial resources from charging for services, meaning that either they do not provide any service or that it is not charged. It can be assumed that this is a field not fully exploited by Lithuanian BIAs. About 12% of the BIAs have indicated having other resources that in the majority of cases include resources coming from the initiation, administration and implementation of projects – especially from EU funds.

[63] The incentives offered by BIAs can be selective or collective. For more on this, see Olson 1965, Wilson 1973, 2003, Schmitter and Streeck 1981, Knoke 1990.

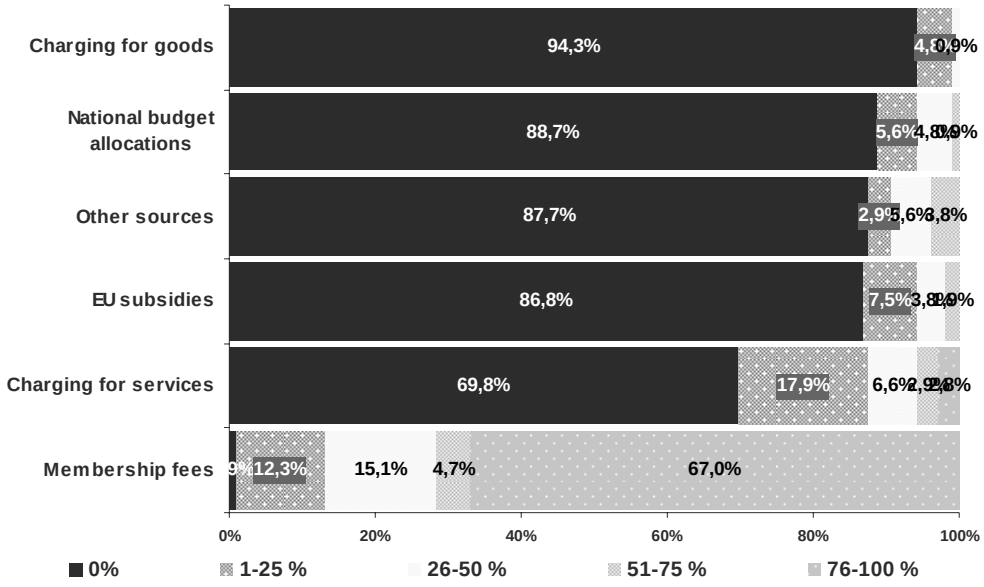


Figure 16 BIAs' budget structure[64]

Financial resources are the main prerequisite for BIAs' activities because financial resources allow business interest associations to have permanent staff, rent an office, initiate communication campaigns, etc. The annual budget of Lithuanian BIAs is presented in Figure 17.

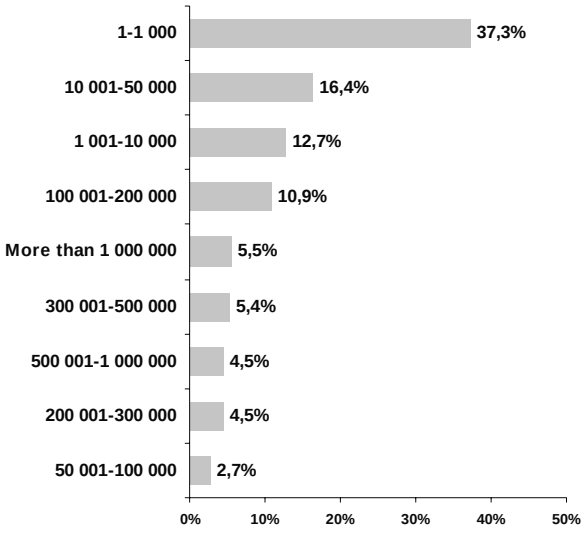


Figure 17 BIAs' annual budget[65]

[64] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

The research showed that about 37% of BIAs run an annual budget which is up to 1 000 Litas (about 290 Euros). It is obvious that an annual budget such as this cannot guarantee either employing somebody or renting an office, etc. The whole figure depicting financial resources indicates that the majority of Lithuanian BIAs must very thoroughly consider their decisions that involve some sort of expenditures, for example, membership fees in some European or international BIAs, renting an office in Lithuania (not to mention one in Brussels), etc.

Budgets this small can be said to be a serious challenge threatening even the implementation of the BIA's mission itself, and also stop the BIAs from holding money and assets in trust for others or to work with public funds, and send a negative message to possible donors, partners or financial institutions. In general, to extract any information related to budget of business interest associations is a rather complicated task for the researcher. There is not that much evidence on the sizes of the BIAs' budgets. The exception is, for example, Dutch and German BIAs, 50% of them declare deploying substantial funds of about 500 000 Euros (Wilts and Quittkat 2004). The size of BIAs' budgets definitely dictates the contact patterns with state political actors at the national level and particularly at the European level.

For the research, Lithuanian BIAs were divided into two groups regarding financial resources: those with an annual budget of up to 10 000 Litas and those with an annual budget of more than 10 000 Litas. Though the budget of the Lithuanian business interest associations is limited in general, the statistical calculation proved that significant results are visible in several cases: Lithuanian BIAs with an annual budget more than 10 000 Litas have more possibilities to contact the national Government and the national Parliament (see Table 11) and the European Commission at the European level (see Table 12).

Table 11 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the national level with BIAs' budget[66]

Contacts with national institutions	Annual budget < 10 000K LT (N = 53)	Annual budget > 10 000 LT (N = 53)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*415*	*65.5*	768.0	***0.000***
Parliament	*46.3*	*60.7*	1025.5	***0.016***
Municipalities	55.8	51.2	1282.5	0.436

[65] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis. An annual budget is indicated in the Lithuanian national currency, the Litas. The official exchange rate is: 1 Euro = 3.4528 Litas.

[66] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Table 12 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the EU level with BIAs' budget[67]

Contacts with EU institutions	Annual budget < 10 000 LT (N = 16)	Annual budget > 10 000 LT (N = 30)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	*181*	*26.4*	153.0	***0.035***
European Parliament	21.7	23.7	210.5	0.589
Council of the EU	22.2	23.5	218.5	0.702
Other European institutions	20.8	22.7	197.5	0.530

It is proven that on average, financially stronger business interest associations are more likely to develop European activities. BIAs that do not have control over substantial funds may instead choose to represent interests and seek contacts with national institutions in the hope that they will be transmitted at the EU level. Similarly, they may rely more heavily on European business associations (Bennet 1997).

The scholarly literature indicates that not only the size of the annual budget, but also the BIA's members' share in the budget has an impact upon a BIA's behaviour and contact patterns with state institutions. It is presumed that the larger the portion of the three largest BIA's members' shares in the BIA's budget, the less frequent the contact with political decision–makers on the national and European levels. The logic of the presumption rests on the fact that in cases where three members of a given BIA make up 25% of the BIA's annual budget, this BIA has less frequent contact with state institutions at both levels: national and European. This is explained because, for the BIA itself, it is very difficult to mobilise members for impact because usually the interests of the top three members dominate and the rest of the members are usually not willing to support the interests of the top three, especially in cases of differences of interest. The survey data shows that statistically significant results are observed only in the case of the European Commission at the European level: if 25% of the annual budget of a given BIA is generated by the top three members of this BIA, it has more frequent contact with the European Commission (see Table 13). No such observations were identified at the national level (See Annex 4).

[67] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Table 13 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the EU level with financial concentration[68]

Contact with EU institutions	Up to 25% in whole members budget (N = 12)	More than 25% in whole members budget (N = 18)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	*18.8*	*13.3*	68.0	***0.049***
European Parliament	18.6	13.4	71.0	0.097
Council of the EU	17.1	14.4	89.0	0.301
Other European institutions	15.7	14.5	94.0	0.653

Furthermore, surprisingly, the quite widely spread notion that the more a BIA focuses on the representation of interests representation considering the share in its budget, the better access it should have to political bodies at the national and European levels does not prove itself in the case of Lithuanian BIAs. The statistically significant but contrary observation is found in the case of the European Parliament: a BIA dedicating less than 50% of its budget to interest representation enjoys more frequent contact with the European Parliament than a BIA dedicating more than 50% of its budget to interest representation (see Table 14). No significant results are found on the national level (Annex 4).

Table 14 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with share in budget for interest representation[69]

Contacts with EU institutions	Up to 50% for interest representation (N = 30)	More than 50% for interest representation (N = 15)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	247	19.6	174.0	0.198
European Parliament	*25.2*	*17.4*	140.5	***0.046***
Council of the EU	23.1	21.4	201.5	0.645
Other European institutions	22.4	21.3	199.5	0.727

[68] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[69] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

In addition to the analysed financial resources and their implications for BIAs' political behaviour shown above, there is the second type of important resource, namely, human resources. The general management structure of Lithuanian BIAs was introduced earlier. This section presents a quantitative expression of the complete management structure in BIAs. Having a permanent staff at BIAs enables them to regularly pursue internal and external objectives more effectively and create an environment that signals long–term activities and continuous relations with state authorities. However, it was found that only 1 or 2 people are employed in the majority of BIAs (about 59%), while 3 or 4 people are employed in 26% of all the surveyed BIAs (see Table 15).

Table 15 BIAs' human resources[70]

Number of employees	Frequency	Percent
1–2	66	58.9
3–4	29	25.9
5–6	4	3.6
7–9	9	8.0
More than 9	4	3.6
Total	**112**	**100**

This finding might imply several possibilities: either these numbers really are too small and this is reflected in the poorer standard of functions performed by BIAs or, on the contrary, it is not reflected because BIAs comprising of other businesses as members might attract human resources from them for the completion of certain functions or tasks without formal employment status, but on a voluntary basis. The small number of employees in BIAs can limit an association's crucial daily activities and keep it from having much contact with state institutions while trying to represent its interests. In comparison, in the Netherlands and Germany approximately half of the BIAs do not employ more than five full–time staff members at their organisation's headquarters (Wilts and Quittkat 2004).

However, having more human resources at an association's disposal is an important indicator with serious implications for contact with state authorities for a BIA at the national and European levels. Lithuanian BIAs were divided into two groups and it was evaluated whether the number of full–time staff members had an impact on contact with state institutions at the national and European levels. The tables below show that more employees (more than two) ensure more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament at the national level (see Table 16) and with the European Commission at the European level (see Table 17). No statistically significant results have been confirmed in the other cases.

[70] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Table 16 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the national level with human resources[71]

Contacts with national institutions	1–2 employees (N = 63)	More than 2 employees (N = 45)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*44,9*	*67.9*	815.5	***0.000***
Parliament	*45.5*	*67.1*	850.0	***0.000***
Municipalities	56.6	51.6	1286.5	0.410

Table 17 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with human re sources[72]

Contacts with EU institutions	1–2 employees (N = 19)	More than 2 employees (N = 28)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed). p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	*19.7*	*26.9*	183.5	***0.041***
European Parliament	21.2	25.1	212.0	0.295
Council of the EU	22.2	24.4	232.5	0.528
Other European institutions	22.5	22.5	237.0	0.988

Almost 30% of the surveyed Lithuanian BIAs reported that they have one employee directly working in the field of interest representation (see Table 18) and, therefore, keeping in mind that interest representation is a complex task involving many activities, one person might not be enough to carry it out effectively. On the other hand, considering the previous findings on financial resources and human resources, one person working directly in the field of interest representation can be regarded as very rational step by BIAs. Besides, in the majority of cases, BIAs acknowledge that their employees work on a voluntary basis.

The presence of employees dealing directly in the field of interest representation determines that a BIA will have more contact with state institutions at the national and European levels. The more employees there are dealing directly in the field of interest representation, the more contact a BIA has with state institutions at the national and European levels. The presence of employees working directly in the field of the interest representation guarantees more frequent contact only with the Government at the national level (see Table 19).

[71] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[72] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Table 18 Human resources directly engaged in interest representation of BIA[73]

Number of employees	Frequency	Percent
1	32	301
2	35	33.0
3	17	16.0
4	13	12.3
More than 4	9	8.5
Total	**106**	**100**

Table 19 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the national level with presence of human resources dealing directly with the interest representation function[74]

Contact with national institutions	No (N = 35)	Yes (N = 71)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*43.6*	*58.4*	896.5	***0.019***
Parliament	47.5	56.5	1032.5	0.156
Municipalities	59.0	50.8	1050.5	0.192

However, *more than two employees* dealing directly with interest representation determine more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament at the national level (see Table 20). No significant cases have been found on the European level (Annex 4).

Table 20 Distribution of observations of contact patterns on the national level with the number of employees dealing directly with the interest representation function[75]

Contacts with national institutions	1 – 2 employees (N = 64)	More than 2 employees (N = 37)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*46.2*	*59.3*	876.0	***0.029***
Parliament	*46.8*	*58.2*	917.0	***0.051***
Municipalities	49.6	53.4	1096.5	0.533

Another option for those BIAs that have too few human resources to be involved in interest representation effectively is to become a member of a national

[73] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.
[74] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.
[75] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

confederation. About 45% of Lithuanian BIAs admit that they do not belong to any national business interest confederation. The rest of the BIAs belong to one or more national business interest confederations.

The analysis of the survey data, however, indicates that no impact is observed in the cases where Lithuanian BIAs belong to no national confederations or at least one national confederation, either at the national or European level (see Annex 4). It could be presumed that being a member of a high–order BIA could provide a low–order BIA with some skills and special knowledge that could facilitate contact with state institutions, however, this is not the case with Lithuanian BIAs.

Furthermore, more various resources are supposed to increase the capacity to act, however, according to the organisation theory, resources on their own are poor predictors of organisational behaviour and capacities. The whole set consisting of an association's representational characteristics, its functional specialisation, its experience, as well as its presence in Brussels must be taken into consideration when evaluating an association's ability to represent its constituency. Lithuanian BIAs were asked whether they have a representative of their interests or an office established in Brussels. Ten percent of the BIAs reported having a representative or office situated directly in the 'capital' of the European Union. Most of the representatives and offices of Lithuanian BIAs appeared in Brussels after Lithuania entered the European Union in 2004.

Having an office in Brussels indicates a certain degree of internationalisation that is presumed to positively impact on the frequency of contact with state institutions. A BIA with a higher degree of internationalisation (presence of a BIA's office or representative in Brussels) has more frequent contact with state institutions at both the national and European levels: this finding indicates that having an office or representative in Brussels ensures the BIA is correctly positioned for more frequent contact with the Government at the national level (see Table 21) and the European Commission, Parliament and Council of the EU at the European level (see Table 22).

Table 21 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the national level with a BIA's level of internationalisation[76]

Contact with national institutions	No office in Brussels (N = 96)	Office in Brussels present (N = 11)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*51.9*	*72.4*	326.0	***0.037***
Parliament	52.4	67.9	375.0	0.115
Municipalities	53.0	63.1	428.0	0.300

[76] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Table 22 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the EU level with a BIA's level of internationalisation[77]

Contact with EU institutions	No office in Brussels (N = 37)	Office in Brussels present (N = 9)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	*21.0*	*33.7*	74.5	***0.007***
European Parliament	*20.5*	*34.7*	54.5	***0.003***
Council of the EU	*20.9*	*32.8*	69.5	***0.005***
Other European institutions	22.5	19.6	109.5	0.463

Another option for having some presence in Brussels is a BIA's presence in EU policy networks, i.e., European BIAs. About 51% of the surveyed Lithuanian BIAs indicated that they do not belong to any European BIA; about 32% said that they are members of one European BIA and about 18% said that they have been granted membership of more than one European BIA. Lithuanian Chemical Industry Enterprises Association is member of the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC); Lithuanian Stevedoring Companies Association – member of Federation of European Private Port Operators (FEPORT); Lithuanian Apparel and Textile Industry Association – member of the European Textile Association (EUROTEX); Association of Lithuanian Wood – member of European Confederation of Wood Industries (C.E.I. BOIS) and the European Furniture Manufacturers Federation (UEA); Lithuanian Machinery and Equipment Manufacturers Association – member of European Federation (ORGALIME), etc. Thus, about 50% of Lithuanian BIAs are members of at least one European BIA, and it can be stated to be quite an effective achievement considering the small financial and human resources that are reported by the empirical research. The role, functions and actual benefits for Lithuanian BIAs as members of European BIAs could be studied in further investigations, however, obviously, Lithuanian BIAs with their representative or office in Brussels can enjoy the benefits that Mazey and Richardson (1993) and Tenbücken (2002) distinguish as principal reasons for BIAs to join European BIAs:

- having an 'early warning system' in Brussels and therefore the ability to stay abreast of developments at the European level;
- the opportunity to veto any proposal of the European BIA that might be disadvantageous and is being prepared for submission;
- to gain access and be introduced to the relevant EU officials;
- maintaining regular contact with other BIAs and having the social status that is attached to group membership; and
- gaining the opportunity to influence the collective strategy and policy of the European BIA.

[77] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

The above beneficial points have one common characteristic – membership in a European BIA provides useful support for national BIAs and demands a certain financial contribution. The latter aspect, however, in numerous cases while questioning the Lithuanian BIAs, was emphasised as a major financial hardship, because the fees are too high for the majority of Lithuanian BIAs. However, further research showed that having a representative or office in Brussels is the only indicator with an influence on the access of Lithuanian BIAs to state authorities at the European level.

It was presumed that for the Lithuanian BIA, being present in a European BIA has a positive effect on contact with political decision–makers at the national and European levels. Some statistically significant findings are observed in this case. The results prove that being a member of at least one European BIA increases the political weight of the Lithuanian BIA and serves as a guarantee for more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament, however, no interrelation between the frequency of contact with municipalities was observed (see Table 23). No significant findings were observed in the case of all European institutions (see Annex 4). The latter can be explained in that European institutions prefer to have contact with European BIAs themselves, rather than their members, and Lithuanian BIAs increase the weight of the European BIAs in front of EU institutions. However, being a member of some European BIAs considerably influences the nature of the national BIA in terms of knowledge building, networking and sharing best practices.

Table 23 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the national level with member ship in European BIAs[78]

Contact with national institutions	None (N = 45)	At least 1 (N = 45)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*38.0*	*53.0*	675.0	***0.006***
Parliament	*38.6*	*52.4*	702.0	***0.012***
Municipalities	44.3	46.7	960.0	0.668

In the research, Tenbücken (2002, p. 115–116) concludes that the most frequent approaches used by national BIAs at the European level is the search for solutions outside of their respective European business association. The scholar states that the national BIAs often directly intervene by urging their national ministers to represent their interests in the Council of the EU or they form ad hoc coalitions at the EU level. Bennett (1997) also finds than as many as 42% of national BIAs choose the so–called 'national route' and access their national governments directly; while 27% decide to represent their interests through the European BIAs they belong to. Therefore, regarding the national and European level, it seems that the national route is tried, tested and secure for most of the national BIAs. Averyt

[78] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

(1977, p. 971) noticed that given the existence of a clientelistic society, state interrelation makes national BIAs even more reluctant to accord a major role to their respective European BIA. However, Greenwood (2003) claims that the importance of the national route is considerably overstated and that today there is an increased familiarity and confidence with the European level. Kohler–Koch (1997) suggests a third way, by saying that in the cases where the influence of a national BIA on its national government is weak, it will try to compensate it through participtation in the relevant European BIA. To conclude, in the case of Lithuanian BIAs, they can be characterised by multiple interest intermediation behaviour for interest representation at the European level. The use of multilateral channels of influence enhances the overall access to state authority institutions. Lithuanian BIAs do not rely on one route because it could be presumed to be too risky and short–sighted.

The empirical research showed that once the Lithuanian BIAs are at the European level, they apply a double strategy which includes direct and indirect access: BIAs represent their interests by establishing bilateral relations to the European institution via an office in Brussels and at the same time, they are members of the relevant European BIA. BIAs present in Brussels usually regard membership in the European BIA as a complementary tool, however, BIAs without the possibility of having an office or representative at the European level consider membership in the European BIA as a principal tool for exerting influence at the European level.

The Lithuanian BIAs, according, to Bouwen's access theory, possess information on domestic encompassing interest in the eyes of the EU institutions. To proceed in the same nature at the national context, it can be concluded that Lithuanian regional BIAs possess expert knowledge. The type of possessed information opens certain possibilities to access certain institutions, however, it closes other doors where another sort of access tool is needed. Human resources owned by Lithuanian BIAs can hardly ensure the professionalisation of a BIA's activities, which is very important for developing or acquiring the necessary expertise essential for effective behaviour.

3.2.2.3. Activities Domain and Interrelations with Decision–Makers

Continuing the debate on Lithuanian BIAs, it is important to analyse in more detail the domain of their activities, with a special focus on interest representation tactics and strategies. Scholarly literature distinguishes four types of activities that BIAs engage in:

- participation for,
- representation of,
- services to, and
- control over members[79].

BIAs share the most important activity that is to represent and promote the interests of their members in the domestic or supranational arenas, or in both. This

[79] For more on this topic, see Schmitter and Streeck 1999, p. 20.

includes maintaining a dialogue with the state institutions affecting the business environment. During the quantitative survey, it was identified that the major activities of Lithuanian BIAs are interest representation (100% of all respondents) and public relations (about 80% of all surveyed BIAs) (see Figure 18).

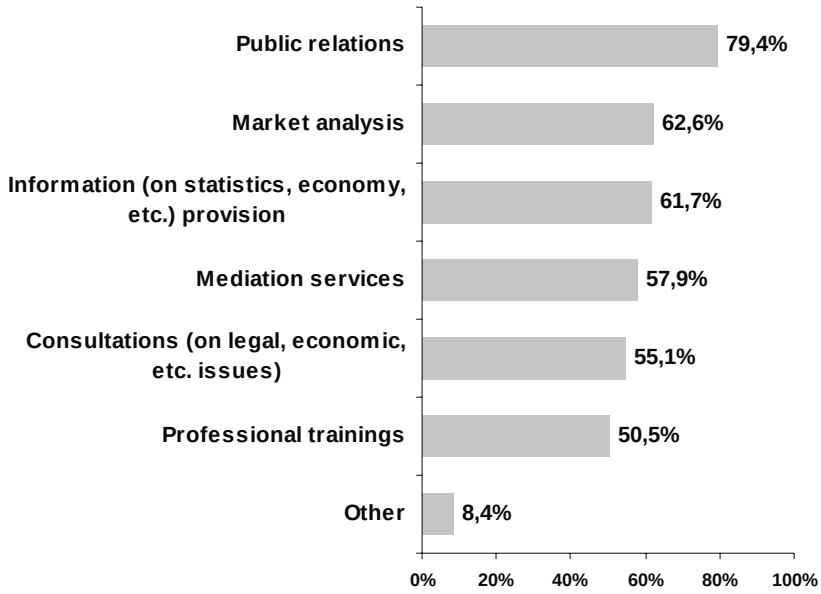


Figure 18 BIAs' activities[80]

Moreover, the above figure suggests that other activities undertaken by Lithuanian BIAs are almost equally distributed concerning the percentages: professional training (about 51%), consultations (about 55%), mediation services (about 58%), market analysis (about 63%) and information provision (about 62%). Other activities make up about 8% of all BIAs' activities and comprise the following sets of activities enumerated by BIAs: (1) building networks and the organisation of various events/exhibitions; (2) publishing different material, project initiation, administration and implementation; (3) issuing certificates, monitoring quality, and (4) performing research. It could be concluded that Lithuanian BIAs engage in many activities and are rather multi–functional, though all the functions are quite conventional. Additionally, engagement in research might reflect an indication towards looking for expertise in a certain field, which might improve access to state institutions, considering that expertise is a very valuable resource.

Lithuanian BIAs were divided into several groups: those providing fewer types of services, and those providing more services[81]. The data proved that BIAs provid-

[80] Interest representation function is not included in the figure. Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

ing more services enjoy more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament at the national level (see Table 24). More services provision signals more proficiency in activities and more networking possibilities that pave the way for more effective access to the decision–makers. No statistically significant occurance has been certified at the European level, indicating that the provision of more services does not impact on the frequency of contact with EU institutions (see Annex 4).

Table 24 Distribution of observations of contact patterns on the national level with the scope of services provided[82]

Contact with national institutions	Few services (N = 41)	Many services (N = 63)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*43.0*	*58.7*	902.5	***0.009***
Parliament	*43.1*	*58.6*	905.0	***0.010***
Municipalities	55.4	50.6	1172.5	0.423

Further investigation of BIAs led to the question of the BIA's budget distribution considering the activities that BIAs perform (see Figure 19). The figure below indicates that almost 37% of all surveyed BIAs spend 76–100% of their budget on interest representation. About 9% of BIAs allocate either 1–25% or 51–75% of their annual budget to interest representation, 39% of the respondents spend 26–50% of their budget on interest representation, and 7% of BIAs state that they allocate none of their budget to interest representation. Only 4.7% of BIAs indicated that they allocate 76–100% or 51–75% of their budget to service provision and 1.9% of the surveyed BIAs give 76–100% of their annual budget to market analysis and monitoring.

The category of other activities that have their share in the budget of BIAs includes: staff salaries, projects for the public, organisation of exhibitions, publishing, support fund for businesses, keeping security regulations, etc.

The resource factor is very important in the context of interest representation. If a greater portion of the budget were allocated to interest representation, it could possibly lead to more opportunities to access decision–makers because it gives the BIA more freedom in choosing its tactics and building the strategies of interest representation, engaging media, etc.

[81] Few services include an interest representation service plus up to three other services. Many services comprise of an interest representation service plus more than three other services.

[82] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

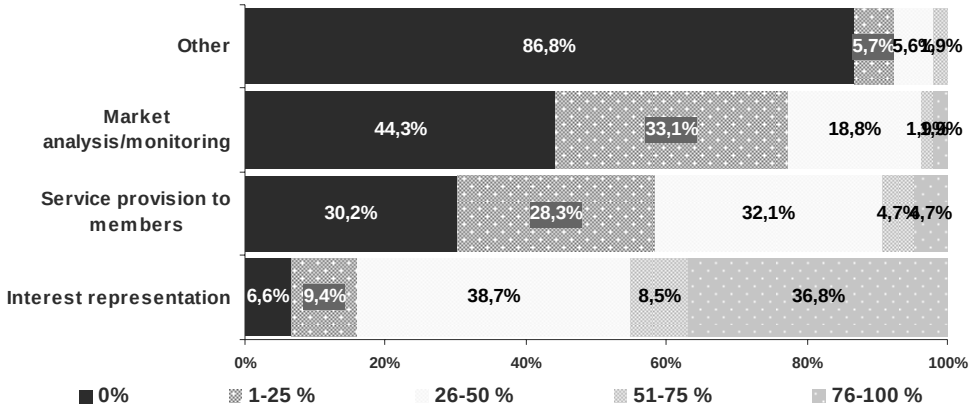


Figure 19 BIAs' budget distribution according to the activities performed[83]

During the quantitative research, Lithuanian BIAs were asked to mark the interest representation tactics they apply[84] (see Figure 20).

The research results indicate that the most frequent tactics applied by Lithuanian BIAs are presentation of the position in writing and public opinion formation through mass media. Scholzman and Tierney's (1983) research[85] showed that the absolute leaders among interest representation tactics is participation at hearings and listening to the arguments presented by the legislatives, and direct relations with state officials with the aim of presenting the BIA's own position; this is then followed by informal contact with state officials (dinner, conferences, etc.).

Another large scale body of research performed in the US showed that the following tactics were applied more frequently than others: (1) testimony, (2) direct contacts, (3) informal contacts, (4) presenting research results, (5) coalitions, (6) mass media, (7) policy formation (by drafting agendas, presence in commissions, etc.), (8) constituent influence (working with influential citizens, etc.), (9) litigation (less consistent as a type of interest representation tactics because it is very sensitive to the group's resources), (10) elections; (11) other tactics (doing favors, monitoring, etc.) (Baumgartner and Leech 1998, pp. 151–153).

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[83] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[84] BIAs were offered to choose among the following set of tactics: presentation of position in writing; use of personal contact; regular provision of main information; provision of relevant information; participation in committees and their sittings; presentation of scientific expertise, research results; cooperation with other groups; formation of public opinion and rallying mass media means; litigation at courts; supporting election campaigns; participation in protests and demonstrations; writing petitions; application of information communication instruments. The list of tactics is adopted from the research performed by Mannheim University (Germany) (Kohler Koch, Quittkat 1999; Quittkat 2006).

[85] The research was carried out in the United States.

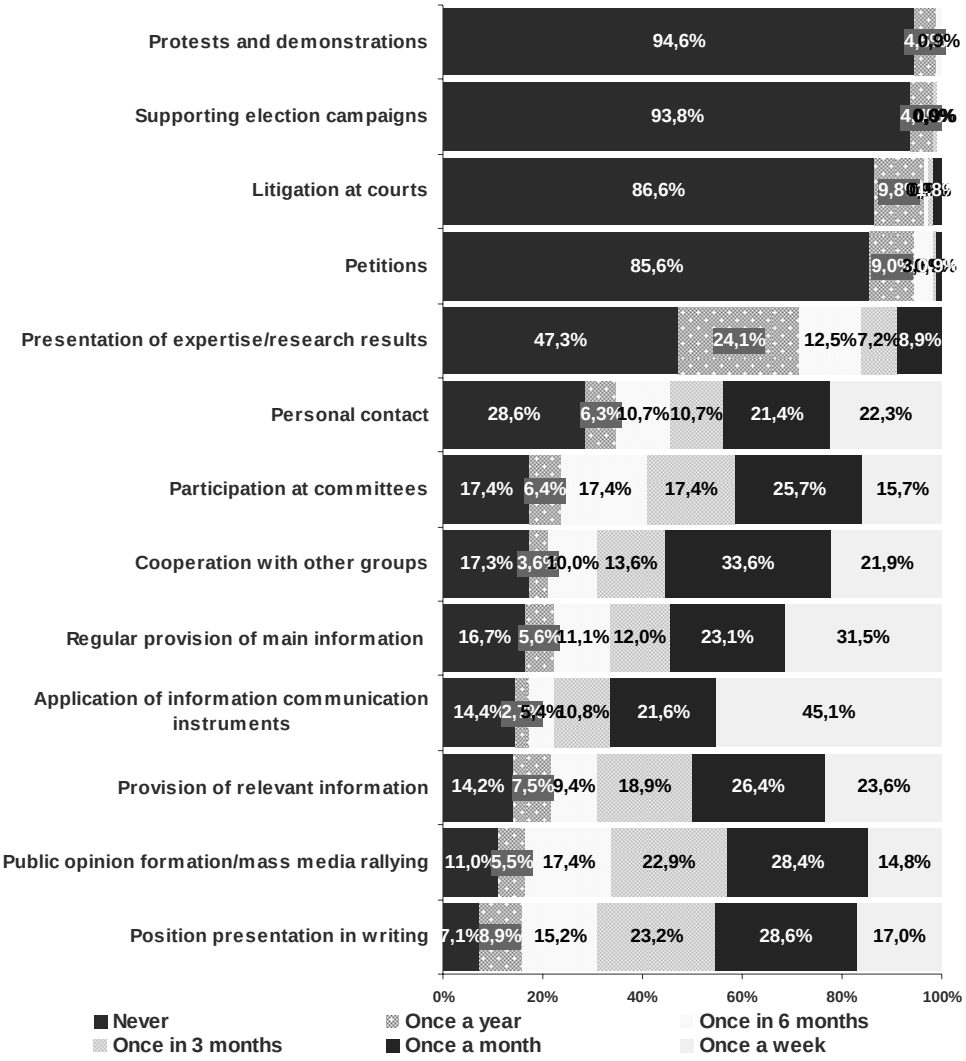


Figure 20 BIAs' interest representation tactics[86]

The present research shows that about 70% of Lithuanian BIAs use personal contacts for their interest representation. This finding partially supports the previous case analysis research that argues that direct and informal contacts are among the most frequently applied tactics by Lithuanian BIAs. Other tactics among those most frequently applied are presentation of arguments, participation while preparing legal act drafts, presentation of research results, certain technical information and communication with the media (Kamarauskaitė 2001, Broga 2001). Besides,

[86] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Kamarauskaitė argues that personal contact and direct relations are considered the most effective interest representation methods by Lithuanian BIAs (2001). Still the present research does not prove that personal contacts are the most popular interest representation tactics by the Lithuanian business interest associations. This confrontation could be explained by the application of different research methods[87]: the case study of several influential BIAs indicates frequent direct contact between BIAs and the state authority, however, quantitative research indicates that certain number of BIAs (30%) never directly contact state officials.

To continue with the results of the current research, as many as 45% of the surveyed BIAs indicated that they applied various information means for the communication of interests once a week. This tactic is a clear leader, compared to other tactics regarding frequency. About 26 % of all investigated BIAs diversify their information provision tactics once a month: they present their position in writing, provide relevant information needed at for a certain reason, and regularly provide the most important information.

A valuable finding is the equal 'ignorance' of certain tactics related to confrontation, such as demonstrations and protests, petitions and litigation in court. An interesting result is that Lithuanian BIAs classify supporting election campaigns together with other confrontational tactics. For example, Berry (1997) classifies the tactics of election campaign support as a separate block of interest representation tactics that is termed as constituency influence. The latter covers the techniques of organising letter–writing campaigns, setting up contacts by influential group members, publicising voting records, and making campaign contributions. The argument in this thesis is that most Lithuanian BIAs consider support for election campaigns only as a financial contribution that still has a clearly negative connotation in society and is strongly associated with the lack of transparency and is a real danger in terms of the public interests. In addition, the limited financial resources of BIAs considerably influence the choice to not support election campaigns because the majority of BIAs operate on a meagre budget and cannot make substantial contributions to political parties running for the elections. Above all, the thesis emphasises the possibility of not revealing one's 'true colours' regarding support for election campaigns, due to the already mentioned negative associations in the public's mind.

The research findings show that Lithuanian BIAs equally engage in various committees and willingly cooperate with other actors while representing their interests. The latter will be discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

It should be noted that the results present quite a narrow choice of tactics by BIAs – the researched BIAs did not indicate any other tactics that could possibly have been left out of the questionnaire. The latter could lead to several conclusions. It is possible that Lithuanian BIAs apply other methods that are not publicly acceptable, or, as Broga (2001) maintains, that the narrow scope of business interest representation tactics is determined by the relatively narrow scope of interests represented by BIAs, an under–developed civil society culture, low awareness of the possibilities of public opinion building, and a weak interest representation culture.

[87] Broga (2001) performed a qualitative case study of several large BIAs.

It should also be noted that resources play an important role in the choice of the scope of tactics. Even though there is a narrow scope of tactics utilised, the research lets us assume that Lithuanian BIAs do not rely on single tactics.

The thesis presumed that wealthier BIAs (those with a larger budget, i.e., more than 10,000 Litas) prefer certain types of strategies that differ from the strategies applied by the less wealthy BIAs (whose budget is up to 10,000 Litas). However, the above assumption was not proven and no statistically significant findings were observed (see Annex 4).

Furthermore, while analysing interest representation tactics, it was assumed that the territorial domain has an impact on the choice of tactics. However, this theoretical assumption has not been proven as no statistically significant findings were found. Bouwen (2002) argues that BIAs acting at one level (national or supranational) cannot usually be characterised by different interest representation strategies, therefore, this thesis also explains this finding in a similar manner – no difference in strategies was detected because domestic BIAs of one country are being compared.

The previous section provided the analysis of the detailed results of the survey depicting the major indicators of human and financial resources, internationalisation level, scope of the activities and interest representation tactics and strategies that impact the behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs. As previously analysed, Lithuanian BIAs consider national institutions as the most significant level of authority to be targeted for interest representation. More frequent access at the European level is guaranteed for those BIAs that have established an office in Brussels, have a larger annual budget, and more employees working in the area of interest representation. On the one hand, the above mentioned findings about the choice of interest representation tactics do not depart from the statement that, regarding the content of interest representation tactics, BIAs are quite limited in their choices. On the other hand, in general, the research revealed that quite a number of tactics are used once a week (8 tactics out of 13). This finding implies a certain degree of variation between the tactics among Lithuanian BIAs while strategies are being built and a certain frequency of access that in turn, can have a certain impact upon the final goal of interest representation.

3.2.2.4. Cooperation Patterns and Interrelations with Decision–Makers

Cooperation with national and European actors remains fundamentally important for business interest associations. Cooperation with national and international players means that new networks are emerging for BIAs and create multiple routes for introducing interests. Cooperation patterns are directly linked to access to state institutions, as they expand the limits for the professionalisation of BIAs.

Internationalisation also can be measured by a BIA's ability to cooperate with international actors. Lithuanian BIAs demonstrate quite a high degree of cooperation with other actors while representing their interests in general (see Table 25). About 84% of Lithuanian BIAs claim to be in cooperation with other actors, al-

though about 16% say they do not engage in any cooperation with other actors while representing their interests.

Table 25 BIAs' cooperation with other actors[88]

Cooperation	Frequency	Percent
No	18	16.1
Yes	**94**	**83.9**
Total	**112**	**100**

The Lithuanian BIAs were asked to describe their cooperation on the European and national levels with the actors – national BIAs, European and international BIAs[89], enterprises, consultants, experts, research organisations, national civil associations, European civil associations[90] and labour unions – who, according to the existing scholarly literature, can influence the number of contacts with national state bodies and EU institutions.

The findings show that almost half of all BIAs actively cooperate with national, European and international BIAs and individual enterprises while representing interests on the European level (see Figure 21). Lithuanian BIAs mostly prefer to cooperate once in six months or once a month with the previously mentioned actors. The second group, in terms of cooperation frequency, includes actors such as consultants, experts, research organisations, and national civil associations. About 5–7% of BIAs indicate that they maintain weekly cooperation with these actors, though most often, BIAs stated that cooperation occurs once a year. The least attractive actor for cooperation was found to be labour unions, probably due to the traditional conflict of interests between employers and employees. Cooperation with European civil associations is detected to be quite rare too.

On the national level, Lithuanian BIAs also cooperate the least with labour unions, compared to the rest of the actors (presumably due to the same reasons stated earlier), although 37% of BIAs confirm having some cooperational links with them (see Figure 22).

The mostly frequent cooperation – once a week – was shown to be with individual enterprises, about 63% of BIAs. This frequent cooperation could be explained by the position that cooperation with individual businesses is necessary in order to extract expertise on certain issues or even attract more members into the BIAs. In general, the findings demonstrate that Lithuanian BIAs do not focus on cooperation patterns with one certain type of actor but distribute their cooperation among a variety of actors.

[88] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.
[89] Only in the case of interest representation at the EU level.
[90] Only in the case of interest representation at the EU level.

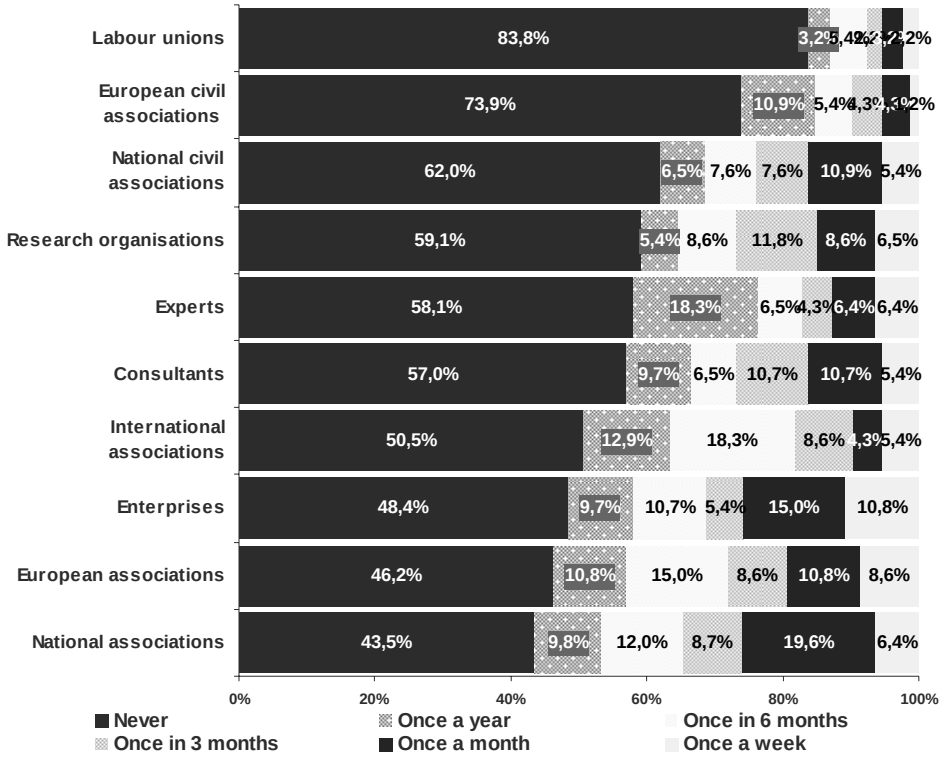


Figure 21 Cooperation with actors at the European level[91]

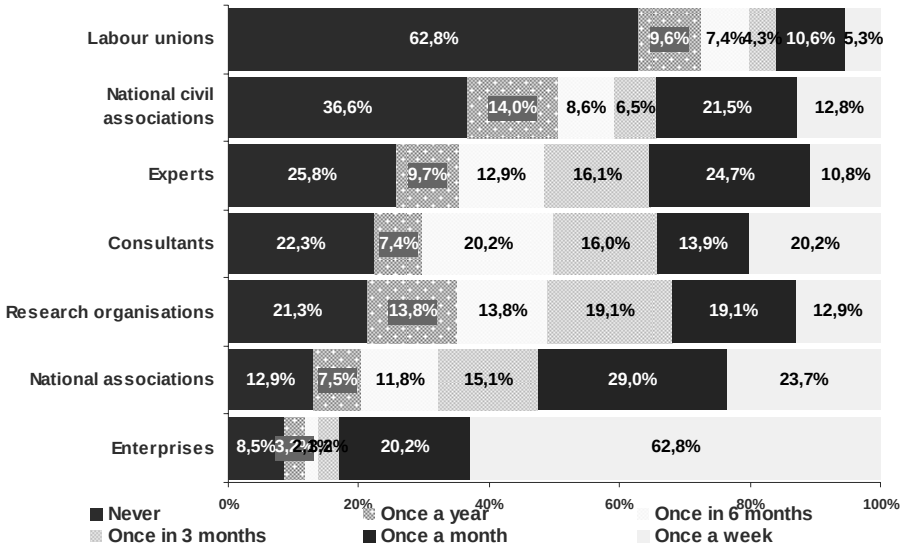


Figure 22 Cooperation with actors at the national level[92]

[91] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

During the quantitative research, a considerable amount of attention was dedicated to the cooperation patterns demonstrated by BIAs. The following paragraphs debate the correlation between Lithuanian BIAs' contact with national and European institutions and the cooperation pattern indicator.

In the case of the national level, two categories of cooperation actors have been identified: professionals and national organisations[93]. In the case of the European level, three categories of cooperation patterns have been identified: professionals, national organisations and international organisations[94].

The correlation matrix below indicates the average interrelation between cooperation with professionals, national organisations, and the frequency of contact with the national Government and the national Parliament. This calculation gives the average correlation. In the instance of the correlation between cooperation patterns and the frequency of contact with national municipalities, there were no statistically significant findings (see Table 26).

Table 26 Correlation between frequency of contact with national institutions and cooperation patterns (N min = 91; N max = 92) [95]

Test dimensions	*with Government*	*with Parliament*	*with Municipalities*
Cooperation with professionals	0.5 **	0.5 **	0.1
Cooperation with national organisations	0.5 **	0.5 **	0.1

Note:[96]

0.5>=r>0.3

0.3>=r>=0.1

Observing the correlation between cooperation patterns and contact with European institutions, it was discovered that the correlation coefficient is statistically reliable, however, weaker than with the national level. The correlation between contact with the European Commission and cooperation with professionals and other national organisations is average, and with international organisations – statistically reliable but weak. The correlation between contact with the European Parliament and all cooperation patterns is average. In the example of contact with

[92] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[93] Professionals include research organisations, experts and consultants. National organisations integrate national BIAs, national civil organisations, trade unions and enterprises.

[94] Professionals includes research organisations, experts and consultants. National organisations integrates national BIAs, national civil organisations, trade unions and enterprises. International organisations encompasses European BIAs, European civil organisations and international BIAs.

[95] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[96] Level of the correlation coefficient's statistical significance: *** – $p<0.001$; ** – $p<0.01$; * – $p<0.05$ (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

other European institutions, a weak correlation is identified with cooperation with professionals. Frequency of contact with the Council of the EU correlates with cooperation with national organisations (average correlation) and professionals (weak correlation) (see Table 27). It follows that in both cases, at the national and European levels, cooperation is an important factor interrelated with the frequency of contact with national and European institutions.

Table 27 Correlation between contact on the European level with cooperation patterns (N min = 44; N max = 47) [97]

Test dimensions	*European Commission*	*European Parliament*	*Council of the EU*	*other European*
Cooperation with professionals	0.4 **	0.4 **	0.3 *	0.3 *
Cooperation with national organisations	0.4 *	0.4 *	0.4 **	0.2
Cooperation with international organisations	0.3 *	0.4 **	0.2	0.2

Note:

0.4>=r>0.3

0.3>=r>0.2

0.2>=r>=0.1

Other tables to follow present the results of multiple regression. In all the illustrations, the dependent variable is defined as contact with national authorities (Government, Parliament, municipalities) or European institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, Council of the EU, and other European institutions) and the independent variable is cooperation patterns: in the case of national institutions, cooperation with professionals and national organisations; in the case of European institutions – cooperation with professionals, national organisations and international organisations.

Set correlation coefficients and determination coefficients are quite high in all regression models as was assumed, because contact with state institutions at the national and European levels is interrelated with cooperation patterns exercised by BIAs. However, at the national level, only in the samples of the national Government and the national Parliament do the coefficients meet statistical conditions[98]. In the mentioned cases, positive beta coefficients indicate that the interrelation is direct. It means that the more frequent cooperation BIAs exercise with professionals, the more frequent contact they have with the national Government (see Table 28).

[97] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis. Levels of statistical significance of the of correlation coefficient: p<0.001 ***; p<0.01 **; p<0.05 * (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

[98] Usually in regression analysis, only the cases that demonstrate statistical significance of p < 0.05 and the value of which meets the condition of B (beta) > 0.20 are discussed further (Čekanavičius and Murauskas 2002).

Table 28 Interrelation between contact with national Government and BIAs' cooperation patterns (N min = 90; N max = 92) [99]

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: contact with national Government				
R	***R^2***	***df***	***F***	***Significance***
0.59	0.35	2 89 91	23.77	**0.000**

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: cooperation patterns	*Unstandardised B coefficients*	*Standardised Beta coefficients*	*Index t*	*Significance*
Cooperation with professionals	0.33	0.48	3.97	**0.000**
Cooperation with national organisations	0.09	0.14	1.18	0.239

Table 29 Interrelation between contact with the national Parliament and BIAs' cooperation patterns (N min = 90; N max = 92) [100]

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: contact with national Parliament				
R	***R^2***	***df***	***F***	***Significance***
0.60	0.36	2 89 91	25.29	**0.000**

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: cooperation patterns	*Unstandardised B coefficients*	*Standardised Beta coefficients*	*Index t*	*Significance*
Cooperation with professionals	0.35	0.35	2.89	**0.005**
Cooperation with national organisations	0.29	0.31	2.56	**0.012**

Furthermore, the more frequent cooperation BIAs have with professionals and national organisations, the more frequent contact they have with the national Parliament (see Table 29). In both mentioned cases, less cooperation means less contact with state institutions.

In the municipalities sample, the previously described trend was not discovered[101] (see Annex 4).

[99] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis. A list of abbreviations is presented at the beginning of the thesis.

[100] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

To continue with the European level, the values of regression model significance, beta coefficients and beta coefficient significance are not favourable in several cases. In the sample of contact with European institutions, only the cases of the European Commission and European Parliament meet the conditions for statistical significance[102]. A positive beta coefficient indicates that the statistical interrelation is direct, meaning that more frequent cooperation with professionals and international relations corresponds to more frequent contact with the European Commission (see Table 30), and more frequent cooperation with national and international organisations corresponds to more frequent contact with the European Parliament (see Table 31). In both mentioned cases, less cooperation means less contact.

Table 30 Interrelation between contact with the European Commission and BIAs' cooperation patterns (N min = 41; N max = 47) [103]

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: contact with the European Commission				
R	***R^2***	***df***	***F***	***Significance***
0.45	0.20	3 43 46	3.65	**0.020**

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: cooperation patterns	***Unstandardised B coefficients***	***Standardised Beta coefficients***	***Index t***	***Significance***
Cooperation with professionals	0.15	0.29	1.23	**0.025**
Cooperation with national organisations	–0.07	–0.15	–0.67	0.505
Cooperation with international organisations	0.22	0.32	1.86	**0.049**

In the samples of the Council of the EU and other European institutions, the previously described trend was not discovered[104] (see Annex 4).

[101] One of the reasons could be the small number of observed items.

[102] Usually in regression analysis, only the cases that demonstrate statistical significance of $p < 0.05$ and the value which meets the condition of B (beta) > 0.20 are discussed further (Čekanavičius, Murauskas 2002).

[103] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[104] One of the reasons could be the small number of observed items.

Table 31 Interrelation between contact with the European Parliament and BIAs' cooperation patterns (N min = 41; N max = 47) [105]

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: contact with European Parliament				
R	***R^2***	***df***	***F***	***Significance***
0.42	0.18	3 42 45	3.03	**0.040**

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: cooperation patterns	***Unstandardised B coefficients***	***Standardised Beta coefficients***	***Index t***	***Significance***
Cooperation with professionals	–0.07	–0.10	–0.41	0.685
Cooperation with national organisations	0.22	0.34	1.49	**0.043**
Cooperation with international organisations	0.22	0.22	1.23	**0.047**

The above section assumes that the cooperation indicator is important for behaviour patterns of Lithuanian business interest associations in the sense that BIAs in cooperation create more opportunities for more frequent contact with national institutions and EU institutions. It can be explained in a number of ways, the most likely being the explanation that the exercised cooperation patterns increase the BIAs' overall know–how base, enriching it with new networking opportunities, building partnerships, developing administrative skills, etc. The latter base inevitably leaves a positive influence on the increased frequency of contact with political decision–makers.

3.2.2.5. Sectoral Features and Interrelations with Decision–Makers

Sectoral features are an important dimension for analysis of BIAs because BIAs behave within sectoral structures. According to sectoral approaches such as meso–corporatism, sectoral governance or policy network, the relationships between interest organisations and the state depend on economic sectors or policy areas (Hollingsworth et al. 1994). In fact, the measurement level from the sector as such is shifted towards the level of BIAs themselves, as it might yield more precise estimates and lead to a more precise picture of their impact on BIAs' behaviour (Eising 2005). Several sectoral features of BIAs are found in the research literature as crucial variables that influence the behaviour. The research focuses on the properties of BIAs that, in the existing literature, are considered to be the most relevant

[105] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

in the treatment of the sector: the economic weight of a BIA's members, the degree of concentration among a BIA's members, and the importance of state institutions for BIAs.

While evaluating the sectoral domain, the surveyed Lithuanian BIAs were asked to indicate how many (one or more than one) and what type of economic activity[106] they represent, meaning, what are the economic activities their members are engaged in. Firstly, Table 32 represents the distribution regarding the economic activities of the members of BIAs. It can be viewed that the proportion between one economic field and cross–field[107] BIAs in Lithuania is quite balanced, as was mentioned earlier. It can lead to an assumption that, on the one hand, almost half of the BIAs represent one economic field, and might be a good source for expertise information for state policy decision–makers, on the other hand, cross–field BIAs represent a larger constituency and possess more broad–based information. Both factors might be attractive for state authorities in certain situations.

Table 32 Sectors represented by BIAs[108]

Number of sectors	Frequency	Percent
One sector	59	52.7
More than one sector	53	47.3
Total	**112**	**100**

Further, Lithuanian BIAs' were asked to name the economic activity they engage in. Figure 23 presents BIAs' engagement in economic activity (of those who represent a single economic activity). The figure reveals that in the majority of cases, Lithuanian BIAs unite businesses working in the manufacturing sector (35% of all surveyed BIAs represented one sector), and 22% of the one sector BIAs mostly represent the interests of trade businesses, as they are the second largest

[106] In this research the term of 'economic activity' is interchangeably used with 'economic sector' and 'economic field'. These are the following economic sectors: A. Agriculture, forestry and fishery; B. Mining and quarrying; C. Manufacturing; D. Electricity, gas, steam and air–conditioning supply; E. Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities; F. Construction; G. Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; H. Transportation and storage; I. Accommodation and food service activities; J. Information and communication; K. Financial and insurance activities; L. Real estate activities; M. Professional, scientific and technical activities; N. Administrative and support service activities; O. Public administration and defence, compulsory social security; P. Education; Q. Human health and social work activities; R. Arts, entertainment and recreation; S. Other service activities; T. Activities of households as employers, undifferentiated goods and service–production activities of households for their own use; U. Activities of extra–territorial organisations and bodies (Law on Ratification of Economic Activities Classification… 2007).

[107] Describing one sector BIAs, the following terms are used interchangeably: 'one sector BIA', 'one economic field BIA', 'one economic domain BIA'. Describing BIAs covering more than one economic sector, the following terms are used interchangeably: 'cross sector BIA', 'umbrella BIA'.

[108] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

economic sector present in the group of Lithuanian one sector BIAs. The economic sectors of electricity, gas, steam and air–conditioning supply and construction are represented by 7% and 8% of Lithuanian BIAs respectively. The economic sectors of mining and quarrying; agriculture, forestry and fishery and education are represented by 2% of BIAs each.

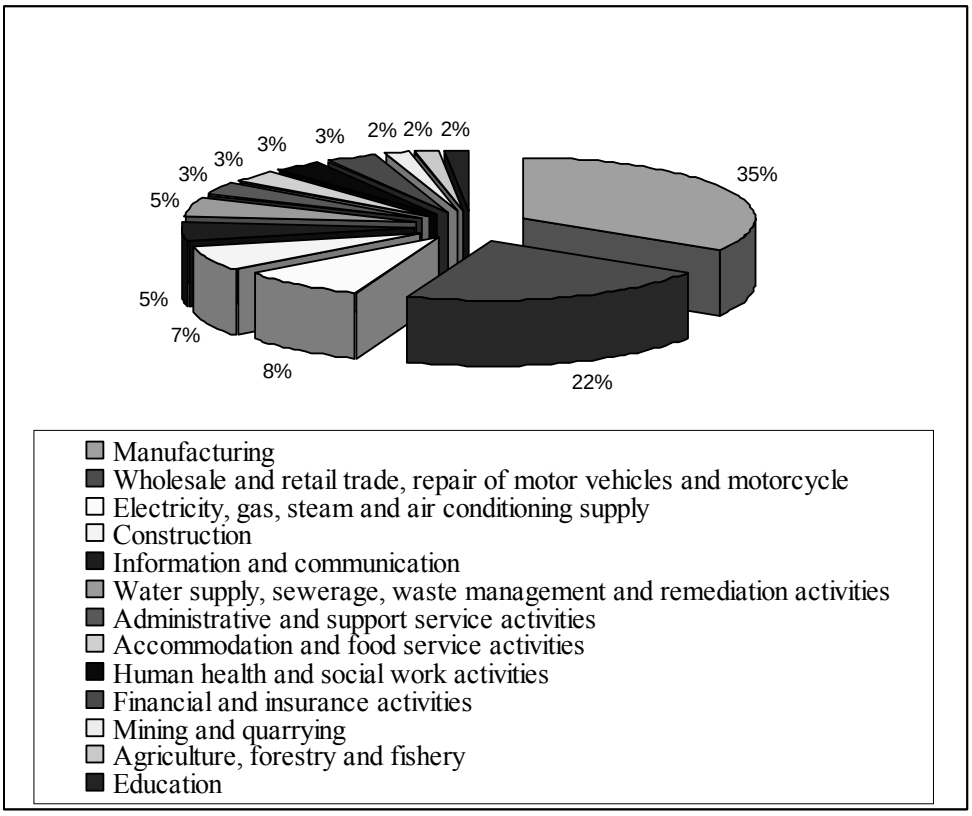


Figure 23 Economic sector represented by one sector BIAs[109]

The BIAs that represent more than one economic sector were also asked to indicate what economic activities they represent (see Figure 24). The trade sector is mostly represented by Lithuanian cross–sector BIAs, where as many as 22% of all surveyed BIAs include trade enterprises and represent their interests. About 17% of all BIAs represent the manufacturing sector and make the latter the second most represented economic field by Lithuanian cross–sector BIAs. The sectors of other service activities, construction, administrative and support service activities, and accommodation and food service activities are represented by about 8–11% of

[109]Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Lithuanian cross–sector BIAs each. The economic sectors of water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities; financial and insurance activities; human health and social work activities; mining and quarrying and electricity, gas, steam and air–conditioning supply are represented only by 1% of the cross–sector BIAs each. To continue, the quantitative survey discovered that there are some economic activities that are not represented by Lithuanian cross–sector BIAs at all. They are the following: public administration and defence, compulsory social security; activities of households as employers, undifferentiated goods and service–production activities of households for their own use; activities of extra–territorial organisations and bodies and real estate activities. In the interest representation scope of one sector BIAs, the following economic sectors were not detected during the research: arts, entertainment and recreation; transportation and storage; public administration and defence, compulsory social security; other service activities; activities of households as employers, undifferentiated goods and service–production activities of households for their own use; activities of extra–territorial organisations and bodies; real estate activities and professional, scientific and technical activities.

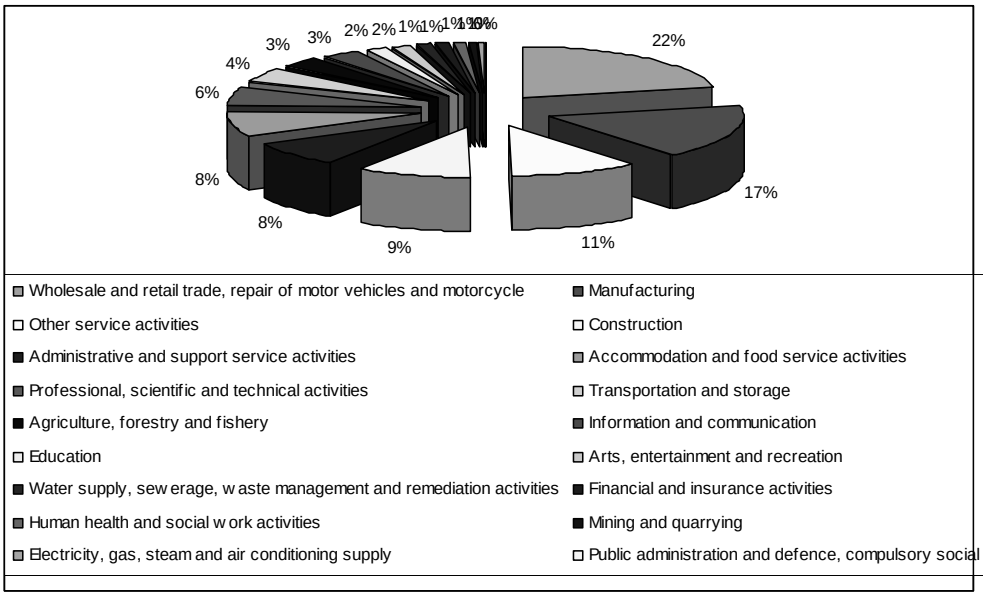


Figure 24 Economic sector represented by cross–sector BIAs[110]

In addition, it was also analysed as part of the thesis, to find out whether more homogeneous BIAs, in the sense of the represented economic domain, have more contact with public authorities at the national and European levels. It was found

[110]Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

that Lithuanian BIAs representing more than one economic sector have more frequent contact with municipalities at the national level (see Table 33) and the European Parliament at the European level (see Table 34). In other cases of other institutions on the national and European levels, no mathematically significant findings were discovered.

Table 33 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the EU level with sectoral homo–/heterogeneity[111]

Contact with national institutions	1 sector (N = 58)	More than 1 sector (N = 50)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	57.0	51.6	1302.5	0.360
Parliament	54.3	54.7	1440.5	0.953
Municipalities	*44.2*	*66.5*	852.5	***0.000***

Table 34 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the national level with sectoral homo–/heterogeneity[112]

Contact with EU institutions	1 sector (N = 24)	More than 1 sector (N = 23)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	21.5	26.6	217.0	0.188
European Parliament	*19.7*	*27.3*	177.5	***0.044***
Council of the EU	21.9	25.1	228.0	0.345
Other European institutions	22.9	22.1	234.0	0.805

The findings presented above requiring comparison with the economic indicators of the Republic of Lithuania, such as the structure of general added value per economic sector (see Table 35). The table shows that, in 2008, the largest share of general added value was produced by the manufacturing (about 34%) and trade (about 17%) economic sectors. Furthermore, the economic sector of real estate forms about 13% of general added value, however, it is not reflected in the competencies of the surveyed BIAs. It could be assumed that transportation is underrepresented as well as it does not appear in the scope of the surveyed one sector BIAs, though it is represented by the surveyed umbrella BIAs.

[111] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[112] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Table 35 Structure of general added value per economic activity in Lithuania in 2008[113]

Economic activity	Percent
Manufacturing	34.17
Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	16.587
Real estate activities and other service activities	13.107
Transportation and storage	12.141
Construction	10.018
Public administration and defence, compulsory social security	6.673
Education	4.861
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	4.374
Financial and insurance activities	3.498
Human health and social work activities	3.312
Electricity, gas, steam and air–conditioning supply; Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	3.120
Administrative and support service activities	2.534
Accommodation and food service activities	1.338
Mining and quarrying	0.872
Activities of households as employers, undifferentiated goods and service–production activities of households for their own use	0.096
Total	**100**

Table 36 presents another economic indicator – the number of enterprises per economic sector in Lithuania in 2009. The table indicates that the most numerous economic sector regarding the numbers of functioning enterprises is trade, followed by the sectors of construction and manufacturing.

Table 36 Number of enterprises per economic sector in 2009[114]

Economic sector	Number of enterprises
Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	14,014
Construction	5,850
Manufacturing	5,139
Professional, scientific and technical activities	4,535
Transportation and storage	3,917
Real estate activities	3,037
Accommodation and food service activities	1,844

[113] Source: Report on Country Economy (2008).
[114] Source: Report on Countries Economy (2009).

Economic sector	Number of enterprises
Information and communication	1,711
Administrative and support service activities	1,630
Human health and social work activities	653
Other service activities	622
Arts, entertainment and recreation	443
Education	426
Forestry and fishery	371
Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	264
Electricity, gas, steam and air–conditioning supply	192
Mining and quarrying	70
TOTAL	**44,718**

The final economic indicator to present is the number of employees working in a given sector (see Table 37).

Table 37 Employment per economic sector (in thousands)[115]

Economic sector	2008
Manufacturing	562.6
Trade, accommodation and restaurants, transportation, communication	417.3
Public administration, support service activities	400.2
Construction	165.1
Financial activities, real estate operations, other service	121.6
Agriculture, forestry, fishery	120.2

According to the statistical data provided on economic indicators, the sector to employ the most employees is the manufacturing sector. The data presented in the previous section will be effectively applied in the following sections where the impact of economic indicators upon the behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs will be analysed.

As it was depicted in an earlier part of this chapter, the manufacturing and trade sectors carry the most economic weight in Lithuania. It has been suggested that BIAs that represent the manufacturing and trade sectors have more frequent contact with state institutions at the national and European levels because they represent important sectors and state institutions are more interested in the well–being of the constituencies of such BIAs. The statistical calculation reveals that the assumption is proven only in one case. If a BIA represents the manufacturing and

[115] Source: Report on Employment Under Economic Sector (2008).

trade sectors, it has more frequent contact with the European Parliament at the European level (see Table 38). No other statistically significant cases were observed (see Annex 4).

Table 38 Distribution of observations of contact at the EU level with economic weight[116]

Contact with EU institutions	Other sectors (N = 8)	Manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade (N = 15)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	9.8	13.2	42.0	0.232
European Parliament	*7.5*	*14.4*	24.0	***0.017***
Council of the EU	10.5	12.8	48.0	0.378
Other European institutions	10.2	12.3	45.5	0.329

To continue, it was measured that a BIA mobilising more than 25% of enterprises of a certain market domain has more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament and less frequent contact with municipalities on the national level (see Table 39). The latter fact means that BIAs representing a smaller share of the market have more contact with local authorities than those BIAs that cover a larger share of the market. No statistically significant findings were observed at the European level (see Annex 4).

Table 39 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at the national level with mobilisation (number of enterprises representing a certain market domain) [117]

Contact with national institutions	25% of the market (N = 47)	More than 25% of the market (N = 55)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	*43.2*	*58.6*	900.5	***0.008***
Parliament	*42.9*	*58.9*	887.5	***0.006***
Municipalities	*58.2*	*45.8*	978.0	***0.033***

To continue with the topic of sectoral features, the degree of membership concentration (or representation density) is a very important factor indicating the extent to which a BIA can mobilise its potential members for influence exertion. A greater membership density might indicate both organisational effectiveness in the

[116] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

[117] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

mobilisation of a BIA's members and greater representation of its domain. This should improve the access of the BIA to policy makers because, in addition to incorporating all the stakeholders' points of view in the political process, it might also increase the democratic legitimacy of the state authority as well. To measure the degree of concentration, Lithuanian BIAs were asked to identify the proportion of all potential businesses dealing in their domain(s) who are members of their BIA (see Table 40).

Table 40 BIAs' membership density[118]

Representation density	Frequency	Percent
1 – 25 %	49	47.1
26 – 50 %	15	14.4
51 – 75 %	17	16.3
76 – 100 %	23	22.1
Total	**104**	**100**

About 47% of all surveyed BIAs indicated that they comprise 1–25% of all potential companies dealing in the economic sector(s) they represent; about 31% of BIAs represent 26–75% of all potential members and about 22% claim to include as many as 76–100% of all potential businesses in Lithuania as members of their BIA. The degree of representation density of the domain is a very important indicator in accessing state policy makers.

Lithuanian BIAs were also asked to identify the institutions that are most important to them while representing their interests. The BIAs were asked to rank the three most significant institutions at the national level, three institutions at the European level, and three institutions irregardless of their level. At the European level, Lithuanian BIAs give their preference to the European Commission (36%) and the European Parliament (about 21%) (see Table 41). It is interesting to note that about 37% of the BIAs estimated other European institutions as significant for their interest representation. The Council of the EU is important to only 3% of Lithuanian BIAs.

At the national level, Lithuanian BIAs consider the Government (about 66%), the Parliament (about 14%) and municipalities (about 6%) as the most important institutions (see Table 42). It is worth noting that among the ministries, the most important was the Ministry of Economy, followed by the ministries of Environment Protection, Finance, Agriculture, Energy, Transport, Social Affairs and Labour, Education and Research, Health Security, etc. About 13% of BIAs regard other institutions (agencies established under the Government/ministries) as significant.

[118] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Table 41 Most important institutions at the European level[119]

EU institutions	Frequency	Percent
European Commission	27	36.0
European Parliament	17	21.3
Council of the EU	2	2.7
European Economic and Social Committee	1	1.3
Court of Justice	1	1.3
Other European institutions	28	37.3
Total	**76**	**100**

Table 42 Most important institutions at the national level[120]

National institutions	Frequency	Percent
Government (ministries incl.)	174	65.7
Parliament	38	14.3
Municipalities	15	5.7
President's office	3	1.1
Other institutions (agencies established under the Government)	35	13.2
Total	**265**	**100**

To conclude, when the BIAs were asked to estimate the importance of public authorities irregardless of their level, all the top three positions were given to national state authorities: the Government (about 59%), the Parliament (about 13%) and the municipalities (6%) (see Table 43).

Table 43 Most important institutions at the European and national levels[121]

Institutions	Frequency	Percent
National Government	112	59.4
National Parliament	25	12.7
Municipalities	12	6.1
European Commission	7	3.6
European Parliament	4	2.0
President's office	1	0.5
Counties' administration	2	1.0
Other European institutions	11	5.6
Other national institutions	18	9.1
Total	**197**	**100**

[119] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.
[120] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.
[121] Source: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Only the third and fourth positions are taken by the European Commission (4%) and the European Parliament (2%). Futhermore, it is worth mentioning that about 7% of BIAs in this context give importance to other European institutions and 9% – to other national institutions (agencies established under the Government).

REVIEW OF THE RESULTS

The political behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs was measured against the following indicators of the organisational domain: size; geographical characteristics; age; membership in other business interest associations; internationalisation; budget; human resources; activities; and cooperation patterns.

The findings showed that the size of a BIA is an important indicator. The bigger the BIA, the more possibilities it has to have more frequent contact with the Government. It could be assumed that due to its size, a large BIA has more staff, is organisationally differentiated, and can generate more internal and external expertise. The size indicator does not prove to render any statistical importance on the European level. The research proved that the geographical characteristics of Lithuanian BIAs are important indicators for their political behaviour too. Access to the three national state institutions, i.e., the Government, Parliament, and municipalities, is determined by geographical characteristics. National BIAs have more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament, but they have less contact with municipalities. The latter are more frequently contacted by regional BIAs. No statistically significant findings could be observed on the European level. The quantitative research found that older Lithuanian BIAs have more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament, which confirms that age indicators are important for the behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs. It can be assumed that older BIAs have more know–how, are more experienced, and have earned a reputation as being a reliable partner for consultations on the national level. No statistically significant findings were observed in the case of the European level. No difference in contact is observed between the cases when Lithuanian BIAs belong to a national confederation on the national level or not. However, statistically significant findings are observed in cases when the Lithuanian BIA is a member of a European BIA. Being a member of at least one European BIA guarantees that the Lithuanian BIA has more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament. The research proved that the degree of internationalisation has an influence on the frequency of contact with public decision makers. Having an office or representative in Brussels ensures the BIA has more frequent contact with its Government on the national level, and with the European Commission, Parliament and Council of the EU on the European level. Though in general the budget of Lithuanian BIAs is relatively small, it does have an impact on the frequency of contact with state institutions. Statistically significant results are visible in several cases: BIAs with a larger annual budget have more contact with the Government and Parliament on the national level and the European Commission on the European level. Moreover, a statisti-

cally significant observation was found in cases where a BIA dedicating up to 50% of its budget to interest representation has more frequent contact with the European Parliament than a BIA dedicating more than 50% of its budget to interest representation. The finding is quite surprising, because in the existing research, more contact is usually a result of more financial resources that increase the level of expertise in the political system in which BIAs operate and about the demands of both their members and political bodies, meaning that these BIAs' ability to mobilise more resources targeted directly at interest representation should be better. The current research clearly disproved this assumption. Besides, the research has also proven that a business interest association's larger budget does not necessarily mean that some specific form of an interest representation strategy will necessarily evolve. No interrelations were found between the budget and the choice of interest representation strategies. More employees ensure more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament on the national level, and with the European Commission on the European level. More than two employees dealing directly with interest representation determine more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament on the national level. Lithuanian BIAs that provide more services have more frequent contact with the Government and Parliament on the national level. It could be explained by the fact that the ability to provide many services indicates a well–built, functioning organisation that naturally has more frequent contact with state bodies. Service provision to the members of the association enables the association to mobilise potential members, shape the process of opinion formation, and represent members' interests. However, Lithuanian BIAs should be aware of keeping a sense of balance because a very high level of service provision could result in that BIA focusing on a very high degree of specialisation on services rather than on interest representation. It should be clearly indicated, that from a certain point, the additional provision of new cases of service provision will minimise the desired effect. Thus, each additional unit of resources spent on the provision of services might diminish returns. The research findings demonstrate a correlation between cooperation with professionals and national organisations, and the frequency of contact with the national Government and Parliament. Observing the correlation between cooperation patterns and contact with European institutions, it was discovered that there is dependence between contact with the European Commission and European Parliament and cooperation with professionals, national and international organisations. On both levels, the pattern of cooperation with professionals gains more significance in the terms of correlation with contact with state authorities. Regression analysis showed that the more frequent cooperation with professionals that BIAs exercise, the more frequent contact with the national Government they have, and the more frequent cooperation with professionals and national organisations that BIAs have, then there is more frequent contact with the national Parliament that they run. To continue with the European level, frequent cooperation with professionals and international organisations corresponds to more frequent contact with the European Commission, and more frequent cooperation with national and international organisations corresponds to more frequent contact with the European Parliament.

The political behaviour of Lithuanian BIAs was measured against the following indicators of the sectoral domain: homogeneity, heterogeneity, and concentration.

Lithuanian BIAs representing more than one economic sector have more frequent contact with municipalities on the national level and the European Parliament on the European level. This could be explained by the fact that the more homogenous a BIA is (representing one economic sector), the more it suffers from internal competition which hinders its contact with other national institutions, such as the Government or Parliament. The same could be said about the European level. The manufacturing and trade economic sectors have the most economic weight in Lithuania. It was also investigated whether BIAs that represent the manufacturing and trade sectors have more frequent contact with state institutions on the national and European levels because they represent important sectors and many political bodies are more interested in the well–being of the constituencies of such BIAs. The statistical calculation revealed that if a BIA represents the manufacturing and trade sectors, it has more frequent contact with the European Parliament on the European level, however, no statistically significant results were observed on the national level. The higher the degree of concentration a BIA has, the more frequent contact it has with the Government and Parliament, and the less frequent contact it has with municipalities on the national level. However, dense concentration can lead to the situation where BIAs' members avoid the association itself. Thus, the relationship between the degree of concentration and contact with political bodies can take a different shape.

The first fundamental research statement arguing that the Lithuanian business interest associations' landscape is rather monopolised in the hands of several particular business interest organisations is confirmed completely.

The second defensive statement is proven partially. Lithuanian business interest associations maintain a high degree of access with public authority institutions at the national level in comparison to the European level. However, as it was already mentioned, about 40% of the surveyed associations claim to have contact with EU institutions. The importance of EU institutions, unfortunately, is not reflected in the organisation of Lithuanian BIAs and has not yet led to the professionalisation of BIAs. A very small number of Lithuanian business interest associations have an employee or unit responsible for EU matters.

Furthermore, the third defensive statement is also confirmed partially. Regarding the national level, Lithuanian BIAs, in their choices on where to exert influence and represent interests, maintain a balance among two national public authority institutions, i.e., the Government and the Parliament. Considering the European level, Lithuanian BIAs have the highest degree of access to the European Commission (50%) and European Parliament (50%). Only 20% of BIAs claim to have contact with the Council of the European Union.

The fourth defensive statement is confirmed partially. Contact patterns with public policy institutions vary according to the BIA's characteristics. Lithuanian business interest associations willing to have frequent contact at the national level with public authorities should take ten indicators into account: size, geographical

characteristics, age, membership in the European business interest associations, internationalisation, budget, human resources, the scope of activities, cooperation patterns and heterogeneity of membership. At the European level, there are six indicators that determine the patterns of interrelation with public policy institutions. They are the following: internationalisation, budget, human resources, cooperation patterns, BIA's economic weight and heterogeneity of membership.

CONCLUSIONS

1. BIAs in Lithuania show a clear tendency towards fragmentation: the Lithuanian business interest associations' landscape indicates the dominance of numerous yet relatively small in membership national level business interest associations and an unnecessarily high number of one sector BIAs operating in a similar economic field, both types being organisationally weak and having too little contact with public policy institutions at the national and European Union level. The occurrence of numerous, sometimes 'paper' BIAs is encouraged by various funding programmes in Lithuania which operate as an attractive stimulus for separate entrepreneurs and businesses. The latter finding contradicts the existing assumption that BIAs do not appear for market related reasons, as they are involved too much in competition over economic issues, but as a reaction to present their political interests and act as a counterbalance *vis–à–vis* other social groups, such as trade unions. Market related reasons for the establishment of BIAs weaken the potential of Lithuanian business interest associations as the position of Lithuanian national high–order BIAs is uncertain due to the fact that they encompass atomised and weak low–order national and regional BIAs. The weak landscape of low–order national and regional BIAs argues the legitimacy of national high–order BIAs in Lithuania as an associational system. Encompassing rather weak and poorly organisationally structured formal or 'paper' BIAs, Lithuanian high–order BIAs act more as clubs of professional managers or entrepreneurs.

2. Developments in the European Union are characterised by a certain reshuffle of the national institutional architecture within the Member States. Prior to the research, there was good reason to assume that the complexity of the EU complex political structure had left obvious traits in the landscape of Lithuanian business interest associations regarding the behaviour of BIAs and their interrelations with public policy institutions at the national and European level. However, the research proved that the EU development process did not affect the behaviour and interrelations domains of Lithuanian BIAs. The majority of Lithuanian BIAs did not adapt to the changing environment. The current business interest association landscape in Lithuania can be stated to be in flux, as the performed survey clearly indicates that a number of Lithuanian BIAs are still being established each year and a stable business interest associational order has yet to emerge in Lithuania.

3. Business interest associations acting in the complex national and European Union political system can be investigated in several perspectives. On the one hand they can be explored as separate organisations, on the other hand, they can be analysed as a totality in the context of their interrelations with public policy institutions, their appearance, performance, strategies, etc. The following are the major appearing models for BIAs' analysis: the democracy legitimacy model, access approach, and the Europeanisation perspective. The thesis has built the model of behaviour of the Lithuanian business interest associations and their relations with public policy institutions at the national and European level based on the analysed scientific literature, the theory of interrelation between interests and the state and integration theories and two logics embracing two main dimensions of BIAs: logics

of membership and logics of influence. The proposed model is characterised by wide coverage of various aspects of BIAs and completeness, and possibility to be adapted for evaluation of domestic BIAs at both the national and European level. The model built a basis for the research instrument which has been used for the first time to research domestic BIAs, i.e., Lithuanian BIAs.

4. Lithuanian business interest associations are dominated by an intergovernmental tradition which is characterised by a national state–centred approach, i.e., Lithuanian business interest associations very rarely by–pass national governments and directly represent their interests to the supranational European institutions. It is also very uncommon that they would integrate themselves into European business interest associations. Though it is important to note that some traits of the multi–level governance approach have been detected by this research. The identified absence of well–organised, strong Lithuanian business interest associations might push separate companies to undertake direct political action, not only at the national, but also at the European level. The national business interest associations' role at the European level within European business interest associations – when there is such a case – is also questioned.

5. Lithuanian business interest associations willing to be politically active and have frequent contact at the national level must take the ten indicators integrated into the evaluation model and discussed in the doctoral thesis into account (size, geographical characteristics, age, membership in European business interest associations, internationalisation, budget, human resources, scope of activities, economic heterogeneity and cooperation patterns). The mentioned indicators have an influence upon the capacities of Lithuanian business interest associations to have frequent interrelation with public policy institutions. In the case of the European level, there are six indicators (internationalisation, budget, human resources, economic heterogeneity, cooperation patterns and economic weight) that determine the degree of frequency of interrelation with public policy institutions at the European Union level.

6. Organised interest groups are distinguished from other political actors because they exert influence upon public policy decision–makers externally as autonomous organisations. It is important for business interest groups to maintain their autonomy and not to become part of the formal group of decision–makers. However, business interest associations in Lithuania are still marked very strongly by 'invisible' links between public policy institutions which has a weakening effect upon the principal precondition of 'autonomy'. The weakened autonomy and non–transparent links of BIAs with public policy institutions discourage mutual trust between organised interests and the state.

7. The articulation of business interests in Lithuania is constrained by the previous political and economic order that stills shapes the expectations and patterns of the performance of BIAs. The explanation for the state of Lithuanian BIAs is inherited from the Soviet regime and is embedded in weak, individual business players, i.e., businesses (enterprises) that are members of BIAs, and also can be regarded as a consequence of a rather weak trade unions movement in Lithuania. Strengthening of the latter could lead to closer forms of cooperation between BIAs

and mergers of smaller BIAs. The mergers and the pooling of the resources would strengthen the BIAs' position at the national and European level. The perception of the consequences of the atomised business interest associations' landscape could also encourage public policy makers to adopt instruments that would support mergers initiatives and strengthen the Lithuanian BIAs organisational basis, and therefore considerably increase their capacities.

8. BIAs' interest representation techniques and strategies relate to economic issues. Social corporate responsibility projects, cooperation with academia, supporting youth programmes, etc. are very rare cases, though if developed, they would enhance the reputation and image of Lithuanian BIAs in society and would give a different tone of interrelations with public policy decision–makers. As the most organised section of society, BIAs could demonstrate will and position themselves as socially responsible actors who maintain transparency and are able to conduct an open and trustworthy dialogue with public policy institutions. Unfortunately, at the moment BIAs stick to an unproductive approach for collective action, and market transition in Lithuania is accompanied by a combination of opportunities and threats that elicit a dual response: either economic individualism and a syndrome of 'lifeboat economics', in which the pursuit of private solutions is uppermost, or a passive withdrawal into anonymous clubs and isolation in the private sphere.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER DEBATE

The thesis positions Lithuanian BIAs in a certain location and within a certain timeframe on the social science research map. This stage is indispensable for further research based on empirical findings, not impressions which easily find their way to the foreground through various communication channels. Business interest associations, as intermediate bodies between society and the state, could further be analysed by identifying state officials' views and testimonies about BIAs' behaviour, because the officials themselves are contacted by BIAs. The latter research comparison with the present research would certainly render scientifically valuable explanations. Further research could also differentiate BIAs' behaviour according to different policy issues in the political agenda as the interest intermediation system also depends upon the issues at stake, therefore, research including this aspect could be very challenging and rewarding in the case of Lithuania. It is emphasised that BIAs' results cannot be confused with the interest intermediation of separate private companies. However, private companies (members of a BIA or not belonging to any BIA) and the comparison of their interest representation activities to business interest associations' activities could be a challenging research subject for future social science research. Deeper examination of the Europeanisation approach in the case of Lithuania (for example after 5–6 years) could also be a rewarding scientific project facilitating the comparison of data and identification of the differences and explanations for their existence as it would be also important to analyse the changes in BIAs' behaviour regarding contact patterns with state authorities after the Lisbon Treaty came into force.

SANTRAUKA

LIETUVOS VERSLO INTERESŲ ASOCIACIJŲ ELGSENA[122]

Ekonomikos ir politikos pokyčiai tarptautinėje erdvėje daro įtaką nacionalinėms verslo interesų organizacijoms ir jų elgsenai. Šie pokyčiai ir įtaka yra globalūs, tačiau ypač pastebimi Europos Sąjungoje (Wilts ir Quitkatt 2003), nes Europos Sąjungai patikėta spręsti svarbius verslui klausimus, susijusius su produktų kokybe, konkurencija, aplinkos apsaugos standartais ir pan. Besiplečianti Europos Sąjunga, bendrosios rinkos kūrimas, vis gilėjanti integracija – 2009 m. gruodžio 1 d. įsigalėjo Lisabonos sutartis – lemia Europos Sąjungos viršnacionalinių galių stiprėjimą ir neišvengiamai daro įtaką atskirų šalių narių nacionalinių verslo interesų organizacijų elgsenai: asociacijos organizacinei struktūrai, narių sutelkimui, bendrų interesų formavimui, interesų atstovavimo strategijų ir taktikų pasirinkimui, ryšių su valdžios institucijomis palaikymui, atliekamų veiklų ir teikiamų paslaugų diapazonui, bendradarbiavimo modeliams ir pan. Šios veiklos yra būdingos formalioms verslo interesų organizacijoms, kurios yra vadinamos verslo interesų asociacijomis. Remiantis Schmitterio ir Streecko apibrėžimu, verslo interesų asociacijos – tai „racionalios organizacijos, kurios identifikuoja, sutelkia, palaiko ir atstovauja tam tikrų gamintojų ar darbdavių politiniams interesams“ (1999, p. 20).

Europos Sąjungos šalyse narėse veikiančias verslo interesų asociacijas sieja bendri bruožai, tačiau jos nagrinėtinos atskirai, nes nacionalinių asociacijų elgsena ir reakcija į minėtąją įtaką yra skirtinga (Wilts ir Quitkatt 2003). Lietuvos atvejis ypatingas tuo, kad Lietuva turi įvairialypę patirtį. Tarybinės šalies ir Europos Sąjungos šalies narės patirtis sudaro tam tikrą politinių permainų aplinką, kuri daro ženklią įtaką organizuotų verslo interesų grupių elgsenai. Organizuotų verslo interesų subjektų elgsena naujai susikūrusiose arba atkūrusiose demokratiją valstybėse paprastai skiriasi nuo organizuotų verslo interesų grupių veikimo vadinamosiose senosiose demokratijose (Ágh 1999, Pérez-Solórzano Borragán 2002, 2004). Kiekvienos Europos Sąjungos šalies narės organizuotų verslo interesų grupių elgsena yra unikali ir nepasikartojanti, nes ją lemia tam tikri socioekonominiai ir kultūriniai šalies veiksniai (Lanzalaco 1992). Tarybinėje Lietuvoje interesų grupės buvo „laikomos“ viešosios politikos periferijoje (Martin ir Waller 1994, Lukošaitis 2004). Ir pačios interesų grupės retai susidarydavo autonomiškais ar savanoriškumo pagrindais (Žiliukaitė, Ramonaitė ir kiti 2006).

Lietuvos organizuotų verslo interesų grupių veikla yra menkai ištirta (Vilčinskas ir Vijeikis 2007). Esančios mokslinės studijos analizuoja bendrus interesų grupių ir jų struktūros bruožus (Vilpišauskas ir Nakrošis 2003, Krupavičius 1998, Lifanova 1997), atskirų verslo interesų grupių taktikas (Broga 2001), asocijuotų interesų grupių politikos tinklus (Kaminskas 2001a, 2001b) ar lobizmo ypatumus Lietuvoje (Andrikienė 2002a, 2002b, 2004). Verslo interesų asociacijų tyrimus riboja

[122] Disertacija parengta autorei būnant 6-osios bendrosios programos projekto „Connex – aukščiausio lygio tyrimų tinklas: aukščiausio lygio tyrimų apjungimas Europos Sąjungos valdymo tyrimams” jaunąja mokslininke. Projektą koordinavo Manheimo universiteto Socialinių tyrimų centras (Vokietija).

ir tai, kad verslo interesai, būdami vieni iš aktyviausių ir geriausiai organizuotų, tuo pat metu yra vieni iš slapčiausių interesų, nes grupės nesiekia lengvai atskleisti apie save informacijos, susijusios su jų elgsena ir veikla, ryšiais su valdžios institucijomis, taikomomis strategijomis ir taktikomis, finansiniais ištekliais ir pan.

Disertacijos **mokslinį problemiškumą** apibūdina konkretūs aspektai, reikalaujantys specialaus tyrimo. Anot Schmitterio ir Streecko (1999), tradiciškai verslo interesai yra vieni iš labiausiai organizuotų ir aktyviausių interesų palyginti su kitais interesais, pavyzdžiui, viešųjų organizuotų interesų organizacijomis, tačiau Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų atvejis yra išskirtinis, nes Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos neišnaudoja „įgimto“ verslo interesų aktyvumo ir organizuotumo galimybių. Dominuojantys Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų požymiai – vidinis organizacinis nestabilumas ir susiskaidymas, atskirų elitinių verslo interesų asociacijų vyravimas, kitų asociacijų masinis pasyvumas ir buvimas „autsaideriais“ palaikant ryšius su valdžios institucijomis (Vilčinskas ir Vijeikis 2007, Adomėnas, Augustinaitis ir Janeliūnas 2007). Esminių Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų pokyčių, t. y. organizacijos ir veiklų profesionalumo išaugimo, nepaskatino ir politinės aplinkos pokyčiai Lietuvoje atkūrus Nepriklausomybę ir Lietuvai tapus visateise Europos Sąjungos šalimi nare.

Mokslinį problemiškumą atspindi šie disertaciniame darbe iškelti ir ištirti klausimai:

1. Kokie yra Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų vystymosi ypatumai ir kokie yra Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos bruožai nacionaliniu ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu?
2. Kokia yra Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsena ir kas lemia Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų ryšių su nacionalinėmis ir Europos Sąjungos institucijomis pobūdį ir struktūrą?

Atsižvelgiant į išdėstytus egzistuojančių mokslinių teorinių nuostatų ir praktikoje stebimų požymių neatitikimus **tyrimo objektu** pasirinktos organizuotos verslo interesų grupės.

Tyrimo dalykas – Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsena ir ryšiai su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu.

Tyrimo tikslas – ištirti ir paaiškinti Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgseną nacionaliniu ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu remiantis empirinio tyrimo rezultatais ir aptarti, kokie Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų modeliai yra galimi ateityje.

Užsibrėžtas tyrimo tikslas buvo įgyvendinamas sprendžiant konkrečius **tyrimo uždavinius**:

1. Išnagrinėti ir nustatyti Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų būklės ypatumus.
2. Nustatyti ir išanalizuoti pagrindinius teorinius verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos ir sąveikos su valdžios institucijomis modelius ir pasiūlyti Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos ir sąveikos su valdžios institucijomis tyrimo modelį bei tyrimo priemones.
3. Vadovaujantis sudarytu Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos ir sąveikos su valdžios institucijomis modeliu ištirti Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų bruožus ir įvertinti, kokią įtaką jie daro Lietuvos verslo interesų

asociacijų elgsenai ir sąveikai su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu.

4. Remiantis teorinio ir empirinio tyrimo rezultatais pagrįsti Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgseną ir sąveiką su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu bei pateikti pasiūlymus jai tobulinti.

Disertacijoje suformuluoti šie **ginamieji teiginiai**:

1. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų tinklas yra suskaidytas ir monopolizuotas atskirų stambių elitinių verslo interesų asociacijų.
2. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos, atstovaudamos savo interesams, teikia pirmenybę valdžios institucijoms nacionaliniu lygiu lyginant su Europos Sąjungos institucijomis, tačiau dalyvavimo Europos Sąjungos lygio institucijose svarba nulemia atitinkamus verslo interesų asociacijų pokyčius, skatinančius aukštesnį elgsenos ir veiklos profesionalumą.
3. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos, veikdamos nacionaliniu lygiu, išlaiko panašų sąveikų lygį tarp dviejų valdžios institucijų, t. y. Vyriausybės ir Seimo. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos, veikdamos Europos Sąjungos lygiu, dažniausiai bendrauja su Europos Sąjungos Taryba ir Europos Parlamentu. Mažiausiai ryšių yra palaikoma su Europos Komisija.
4. Pagrindiniai Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgseną ir sąveikas su valdžios institucijomis lemiantys indikatoriai yra verslo interesų asociacijų dydis (narių skaičius), žmogiškieji ištekliai (asociacijų darbuotojai) ir finansinės galimybės, amžius (skaičiuojamas nuo asociacijos įsteigimo), vieta hierarchinėje asociacinėje struktūroje (konfederacija, t. y. verslo interesų asociacijų asociacija ar verslo įmonių asociacija), ekonominės veiklos sritis ir narystės homogeniškumas ir heterogeniškumas.

Disertacijos tyrimo metodologinį pagrindą sudaro socialiniuose moksluose susiformavusi kiekybinio tyrimo samprata ir modernios, socialiniams mokslams būdingos matematinio duomenų apdorojimo strategijos, grįstos daugiamate statistika.

Rengiant disertacinį darbą buvo taikyti šie **tyrimo metodai**:

- Mokslinės literatūros analizė: atlikta grupių, valstybės ir organizuotų interesų grupių sąveikos, interesų grupių ryšių su valdžios institucijomis ir Europos Sąjungos integracijos teorijų analizė.
- Kiekybinis tyrimas: sudaryta kiekybinio tyrimo priemonė – klausimynas. Tyrimo klausimyno vidinė dermė (patikimumas ir validumas) patikrinta psichometrine statistika. 2007–2009 m. atliktas pirmasis Lietuvoje nacionalinių verslo interesų asociacijų kiekybinis tyrimas.
- Apklausa – apklausta 112 Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų. Kiekybinio tyrimo grįžtamumas – 75 proc. Apklausa atlikta vadovaujantis nustatyta tyrimo schema.
- Statistinė duomenų analizė: kiekybinio tyrimo duomenys apdoroti naudojant SPSS programinę įrangą. Disertacijoje pritaikyti daugiamačiai statistikos metodai: koreliacija, linijinė regresija, faktorinė analizė ir multidimensinės skalės. Disertacinio darbo gynamieji teiginiai įvertinti vadovaujantis *Mann-Whitney U* kriterijumi.

Disertacijos **teorinis reikšmingumas ir mokslinis naujumas** pasireiškia tuo, kad remiantis grupių, valstybės ir organizuotų interesų sąveikos, interesų grupių ryšių su valdžios institucijomis ir Europos Sąjungos integracijos teorijomis ir narystės logikos bei įtakos logikos modeliais buvo sukurtas naujas integruotas verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos modelis. Atlikta reali mokslinė veikla, papildanti jau esančius teorinius vaizdinius apie organizuotų verslo interesų subjektų elgseną ir sąveikas su valdžios institucijomis. Tyrimo metu sukaupti reikšmingi mokslo faktai apie Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgseną ir ryšius su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu, suteikiantys naujų teorinių dimensijų tolimesniems verslo interesų grupių elgsenos ir ryšių su valdžios institucijomis tyrimams.

Tyrimo praktinę ir taikomąją reikšmę apibūdina tai, kad atlikus kiekybinį tyrimą ir apklausus 112 Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų pirmą kartą Lietuvoje gauti duomenys ir sukaupti mokslo faktai atveria naujas galimybes tobulinti Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgseną ir sąveikos su valdžios institucijomis modelius nacionaliniu ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu. Disertacinio darbo tyrimo rezultatų vartotojų ratas apima Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijas, Lietuvos valdžios institucijas ir Europos Sąjungos institucijas.

Disertacinio darbo struktūra ir apimtis. Disertacinį darbą sudaro įvadas, trys dalys (teorinė, disertacijos metodologija ir kiekybinio tyrimo duomenų analizė ir gautų rezultatų interpretavimas), rezultatų apibendrinimas, išvados ir pasiūlymai tolimesnei mokslinei diskusijai. Darbo apimtis – 166 puslapiai (be priedų). Disertaciniame darbe pateiktos 43 lentelės ir 24 paveikslai. Disertacinis darbas papildytas 4 priedais. Rašant darbą pasinaudota 217 literatūros šaltinių.

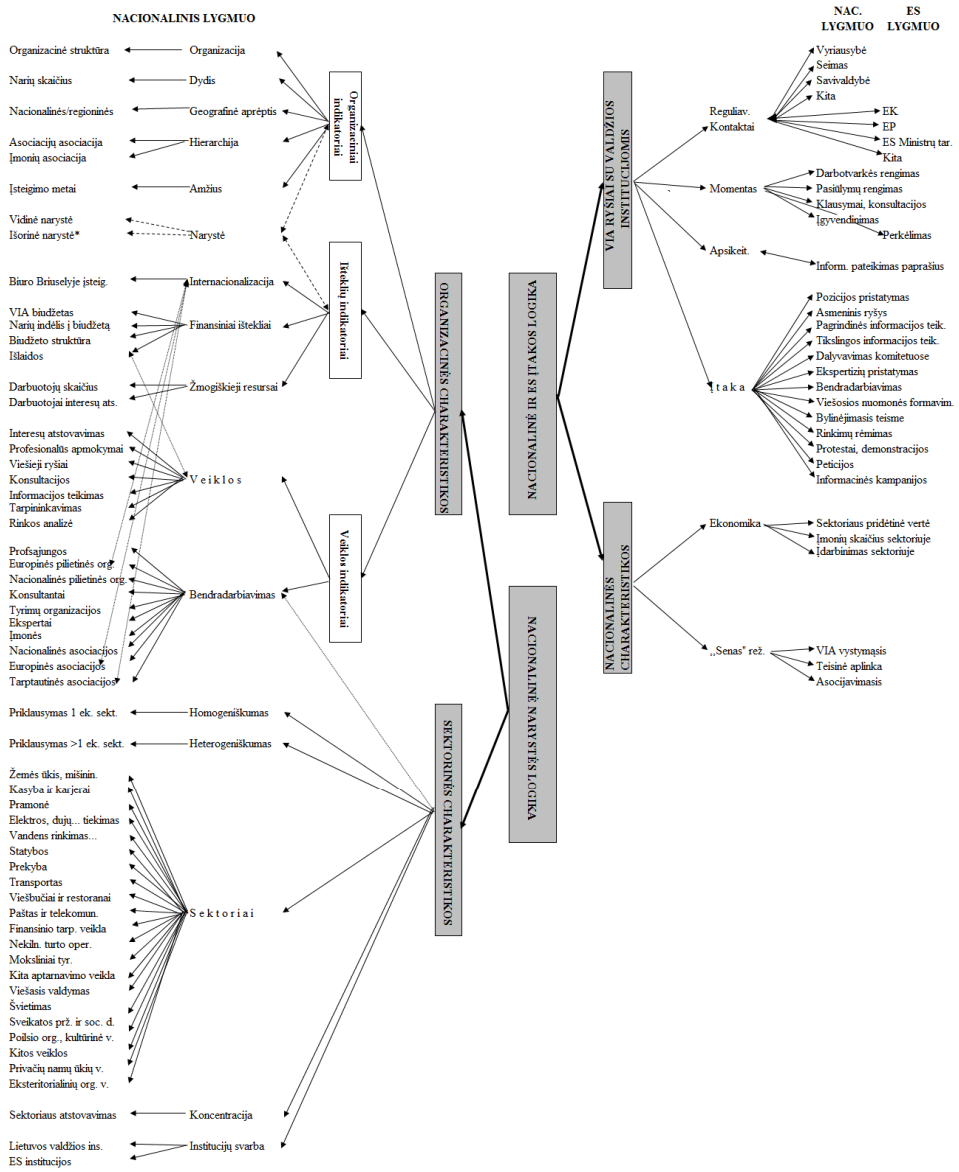
Įvadas. Įvade atskleidžiamas temos aktualumas, pagrindžiama disertacijos mokslinė problema, apibrėžiamas tyrimo objektas, dalykas, tyrimo tikslas bei uždaviniai, apibrėžiami taikomi tyrimo metodai, atskleidžiamas disertacinio darbo mokslinis naujumas ir praktinis reikšmingumas.

1 dalis. Organizuotų interesų ir valdžios institucijų sąryšiai socialiniuose moksluose. Pirmoje dalyje yra nagrinėjami organizuotų interesų grupių, verslo interesų asociacijų, jų elgsenos ir kiti pagrindiniai konceptai ir jų traktuotės. Analizuojamos organizuotų interesų ir valdžios institucijų sąryšių ir Europos Sąjungos integracijos poveikio organizuotiems interesams teorijos. Nagrinėjami verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos modeliai: demokratijos legitimumo modelis, interesų grupių ryšių su valdžios institucijomis modelis, europeizacijos įtakos organizuotiems interesams modelis ir interesų įtakos kelių modelis.

2 dalis. Disertacijos metodologija. Antroje dalyje pateikiama tyrimo logikos schema, argumentuojamas pasirinktų statistinių metodų pagrįstumas tyrime, analizuojami narystės logikos ir įtakos logikos modeliai. Remiantis jais ir ankstesne analize sudaromas Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos modelis (1 pav.).

Tyrimas patvirtino, kad pristatytas verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos modelis yra tinkamas Lietuvai. Antroje dalyje pristatoma disertacijos tyrimo priemonė (instrumentas) – klausimynas, apibūdinama tyrimo eiga, nustatoma imtis, pristatomi duomenų rinkimo ir tyrimo šaltiniai.

3 dalis. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsena. Trečioje dalyje analizuojami Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų vystymosi ypatumai, pristatomi kiekybinio tyrimo, atlikto pagal sudarytą verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos modelį, duomenys ir išsami jų analizė bei aptariami gauti rezultatai. Be to, pateikiama Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų ryšių su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu ryšių struktūra.



1 pav. Verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos modelis[123]

[123] Šaltinis: adaptuota iš Schmitter ir Streck (1999), Schneider ir Tenbücken (2002), Lindblom (1977), Wilson (2003), Kohler–Koch ir Quittkat (1999).

Nors Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos yra nedidelės (turimas omeny asociacijų narių skaičius), jos disponuoja labai ribotais žmogiškaisiais ištekliais ir finansinėmis galimybėmis, bet vis dėlto šie veiksniai atlikto kiekybinio tyrimo metu buvo įvertinti kaip darantys pakankamai reikšmingą įtaką asociacijų elgsenai – Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos gana intensyviai veikia atstovaudamos savo narių interesams valdžios institucijose nacionaliniu lygiu: Vyriausybėje politiniu ir administraciniu lygiu, Seime per politines partijas, komitetus ir per Seimo narius, taip pat ir savivaldybėse politiniu ir administraciniu lygiu. Vyriausybės Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos dažniausiai atstovauja savo interesams administraciniu lygiu, tačiau Vyriausybės politinis lygmuo taip pat yra pakankamai patrauklus asociacijoms (1 lentelė). Seime Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos dažniausiai bendrauja su Seimo nariais, ir tai paaiškina tai, kad asociacijos, atstovaudamos savo interesams, dažnai pirmenybę teikia asmeninių ryšių taktikoms.

1 lentelė. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų ryšių su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu lygiu struktūra [124]

Institucija	Lygmuo	Dažnumas	Procentai
Vyriausybė	Politinis lygmuo	Nė karto	23,1 %
		Kartą per metus	7,4 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	69,5 %
	Administracinis lygmuo	Nė karto	12,0 %
		Kartą per metus	7,4 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	80,6 %
Seimas	Politinės partijos	Nė karto	29,6 %
		Kartą per metus	14,8 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	55,6 %
	Seimo nariai	Nė karto	17,6 %
		Kartą per metus	13,9 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	68,5 %
	Seimo komitetai	Nė karto	26,9 %
		Kartą per metus	12,0 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	61,1 %
Savivaldybės	Politinis lygmuo	Nė karto	25,8 %
		Kartą per metus	16,7 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	57,5 %
	Administracinis lygmuo	Nė karto	28,1 %
		Kartą per metus	12,1 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	59,8 %

Apie 40 proc. tyrime dalyvavusių Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų teigia turinčios ryšių su Europos Sąjungos institucijomis. Analizuojant šių ryšių struktūrą stebimas priešingas rezultatas nei nacionaliniu lygiu (2 lentelė). Lietuvos verslo in-

[124] Šaltinis – pateikta autorės atlikus kiekybinį Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų tyrimą 2007–2009 m. disertacinio darbo kontekste.

teresų asociacijos dažniausiai palaiko ryšį su Europos Komisija, viena reikšmingiausių Europos Sąjungos institucijų. Nors ši institucija yra atvira visų Europos Sąjungos šalių narių interesams, tačiau Lietuvos verslo interesai neturi tokių pačių interesų atstovavimo galimybių kaip verslo interesų asociacijos iš tokių šalių narių kaip Vokietija, Prancūzija, Ispanija ar Jungtinė Karalystė, nes Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų ekonominis svarumas yra žymiai mažesnis. Todėl Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos privalo rinktis netiesioginį interesų atstovavimą per narystę nacionalinėse verslo interesų konfederacijose arba europinėse verslo interesų asociacijose. Tačiau narystė Europos asociacijose neretai sukelia asociacijoms finansinių sunkumų dėl didelio narystės mokesčio.

2 lentelė. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų ryšių su valdžios institucijomis Europos Sąjungos lygiu struktūra[125]

Institucija	Lygmuo	Dažnumas	Procentai
Europos Komisija	Politinis lygmuo	Nė karto	61,7 %
		Kartą per metus	25,5 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	12,8 %
	Administracinis lygmuo	Nė karto	51,1 %
		Kartą per metus	20,0 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	28,9 %
Europos Parlamentas	Sekretoriatas	Nė karto	71,7 %
		Kartą per metus	15,2 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	13,1 %
	Parlamento nariai	Nė karto	50,0 %
		Kartą per metus	23,9 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	26,1 %
	Komitetai	Nė karto	71,7 %
		Kartą per metus	13,0 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	15,3 %
Europos Sąjungos Taryba	Politinis lygmuo	Nė karto	73,9 %
		Kartą per metus	8,7 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	17,4 %
	COREPER, darbo grupės	Nė karto	80,0 %
		Kartą per metus	6,7 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	13,3 %
	Generalinis sekretoriatas	Nė karto	88,6 %
		Kartą per metus	9,1 %
		Du/daugiau kartų per metus	2,3 %

Trečioje dalyje taip pat įvertinami disertacijos ginamieji teiginiai.

Visiškai patvirtintas pirmasis ginamasis teiginys, kad dabartinis Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų tinklas yra suskaidytas ir monopolizuotas. Jame dominuoja atskiros stambios elitinės verslo interesų asociacijos.

[125] Šaltinis – pateikta autorės atlikus kiekybinį Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų tyrimą 2007–2009 disertacinio darbo kontekste.

Antrasis disertacijos ginamasis teiginys patvirtintas iš dalies. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos, atstovaudamos savo interesams, teikia pirmenybę valdžios institucijoms nacionaliniu lygiu, apie 40 proc. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų patvirtino, kad turi ryšių su Europos Sąjungos institucijomis. Dalyvavimo Europos Sąjungos lygiu svarba, deja, nelemia atitinkamų verslo interesų asociacijų pokyčių, t. y. žymaus elgsenos ir veiklų profesionalumo lygmens augimo. Tik maža dalis Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų turi darbuotoją, dirbantį pilnu etatu, ar padalinį, atsakingą už Europos Sąjungos lygio reikalus.

Trečiasis disertacijos teiginys patvirtintas taip pat iš dalies. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos, veikdamos nacionaliniu lygiu, išlaiko sąveikos (kontaktų dažnumo) balansą tarp dviejų valdžios institucijų, t. y. Vyriausybės ir Seimo. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos, veikdamos Europos Sąjungos lygiu, dažniausiai bendrauja su Europos Komisija (apie 50 proc.) ir Europos Parlamentu (apie 50 proc.). Tik apie 20 proc. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų teigia turinčios ryšių su Europos Sąjungos Taryba.

Ketvirtasis disertacijos teiginys patvirtintas iš dalies. Pagrindiniai Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų sąveikos su valdžios institucijomis dažnumą (kontaktų) lemiantys veiksniai yra verslo interesų asociacijų dydis (narių skaičius), geografinė aprėptis (nacionalinės ar regioninės asociacijos), amžius (skaičiuojamas nuo įkūrimo metų), narystė kitose asociacijose (europinėse asociacijose), internacionalizacija (biuro įsteigimas Briuselyje), finansiniai ištekliai, žmogiškieji ištekliai, atliekamų veiklų ir teikiamų paslaugų diapazonas, bendradarbiavimo modeliai ir narystės heterogeniškumas. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenai ir ryšių su Europos Sąjungos institucijomis struktūrai turi įtakos šie veiksniai: internacionalizacija, finansiniai ištekliai, žmogiškieji ištekliai, bendradarbiavimo modeliai, asociacijos ekonominis svoris ir narystės heterogeniškumas (skėtinės asociacijos).

Rezultatų apžvalga

Vertinant pagal sudarytą verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos modelį organizacinė ir sektorinė Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų charakteristikos daro įtaką asociacijų elgsenai ir ryšiams su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu.

Disertaciniame darbe ištirta, kokią įtaką asociacijų elgsenai daro šie Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų organizaciniai požymiai: dydis (narių skaičius), geografinė aprėptis (nacionalinės ar regioninės asociacijos), amžius (skaičiuojamas nuo asociacijos įkūrimo), narystė kitose verslo interesų asociacijose, internacionalizacija (biuro įsteigimas ar atstovo turėjimas Briuselyje), biudžetas, žmogiškieji ištekliai (pilnu etatu dirbantys asociacijose darbuotojai), veiklų apimtis (atliekamos veiklos ir siūlomos paslaugos) ir bendradarbiavimo būdai (bendradarbiavimas su ekspertais, institucijomis, kitomis asociacijomis ir pan.).

Tyrimo rezultatai įrodė, kad verslo interesų asociacijų dydis yra svarbus kintamasis, darantis įtaką elgsenai, ryšiams su Vyriausybe nacionaliniu lygiu ir jų struktūrai. Verslo interesų asociacijų dydis yra svarbus kintamasis, leidžiantis manyti, kad didesnės asociacijos turi daugiau žmogiškųjų išteklių ir gali sukurti dau-

giau vidinės ir išorinės ekspertizės. Tačiau Europos Sąjungos lygiu šis kintamasis neturi reikšmės.

Geografinė aprėptis turi įtakos nacionalių verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenai: jų kontaktai su Vyriausybe ir Seimu yra dažnesni. Regioninės verslo interesų asociacijos dažniau bendrauja su savivaldybėmis. Geografinės aprėpties įtaka Europos Sąjungos lygiu nenustatyta.

Verslo interesų asociacijų amžius turi įtakos ryšių su Vyriausybe ir Seimu dažnumui. Verslo interesų asociacijų amžius reiškia didelę asociacijų patirtį ir ekspertizę, kuria galima tikslingai pasinaudoti, taip pat suteikia patikimo socialinio partnerio statusą vykstant konsultacijoms nacionaliniu lygiu. Verslo interesų asociacijų amžius neturi reikšmės jų elgsenai Europos Sąjungos lygiu.

Regioninių verslo interesų asociacijų narystė nacionalinėse asociacijose (konfederacijose) neturi įtakos jų elgsenai ir ryšių su valdžios institucijomis struktūrai, tačiau Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų narystė europinėse asociacijose reiškia dažnesnius verslo interesų asociacijų ryšius su Vyriausybe ir Seimu nacionaliniu lygiu. Įtaka Europos Sąjungos lygiu neužfiksuota.

Internacionalizacijos kintamasis daro teigiamą įtaką Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenai ir kontaktų su Vyriausybe nacionaliniu lygiu dažnumui, taip pat ryšių su Europos Komisija, Europos Parlamentu ir Europos Sąjungos Taryba dažnumui.

Nors Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos disponuoja gana mažu biudžetu, tačiau didesni finansiniai ištekliai išlieka svarbus organizacinės charakteristikos kintamasis, darantis įtaką asociacijų elgsenai ir kontaktų dažnumui su Vyriausybe ir Seimu ir Europos Komisija. Tačiau svarbus yra ne tik biudžeto dydis, bet ir tai, kaip biudžetas yra paskirstomas. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos, kurios skiria iki 50 proc. savo biudžeto interesų atstovavimui, turi dažnesnius kontaktus su Europos Parlamentu, nei kad verslo interesų asociacijos, skiriančios daugiau nei 50 proc. savo biudžeto interesų atstovavimui. Šis rezultatas yra netikėtas, nes įprasta teigti, kad didesnė biudžeto dalis, skiriama interesų atstovavimui, reiškia dažnesnius kontaktus. Ryšys tarp biudžeto ir verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos interesų atstovavimo strategijų pasirinkime nenustatytas.

Žmogiškųjų išteklių kintamasis turi įtakos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenai. Daugiau darbuotojų įdarbinusios verslo interesų asociacijos turi dažnesnius ryšius su Vyriausybe ir Seimu nacionaliniu lygiu ir Europos Komisija Europos Sąjungos lygiu. Darbuotojų, dirbančių tiesiogiai interesų atstovavimo srityje, skaičius taip pat turi įtakos ryšių su valdžios institucijomis struktūrai.

Verslo interesų asociacijų veiklų ir siūlomų paslaugų apimtis daro įtaką asociacijų elgsenai. Didesnė veiklų apimtis lemia dažnesnius kontaktus su Vyriausybe ir Seimu. Plati veiklų apimtis pažymi gerai organizuotą verslo interesų asociaciją, galinčią veiksmingai sutelkti savo narius, jų interesus, operatyviai formuoti bendrą poziciją ir jai atstovauti. Tačiau plati atliekamų veiklų apimtis taip pat gali turėti įtakos verslo interesų asociacijų misijai ją transformuojant į tam tikrų veiklų atlikėją ir paslaugų teikėją.

Tyrimo metu nustatyti koreliacijos atvejai tarp bendradarbiavimo su profesionalais ir nacionalinėmis organizacijomis ir kontaktų dažnumo su Vyriausybe ir

Seimu nacionaliniu lygiu. Europos Sąjungos lygiu nustatyta koreliacija tarp ryšių su Europos Komisija ir Europos Parlamentu ir bendradarbiavimo su profesionalais, nacionalinėmis, europinėmis ir tarptautinėmis organizacijomis. Atlikta regresija parodė, kad verslo interesų asociacija, daugiau bendradarbiaudama su profesionalais, turi dažnesnius ryšius su Vyriausybe nacionaliniu lygiu, o dažnesnis bendradarbiavimas su profesionalais ir nacionalinėmis organizacijomis lemia dažnesnius kontaktus su Seimu nacionaliniu lygiu. Europos Sąjungos lygiu dažnesnis bendradarbiavimas su profesionalais ir tarptautinėmis organizacijomis atitinka dažnesnius kontaktus su Europos Komisija, o dažnesnis bendradarbiavimas su nacionalinėmis ir tarptautinėmis organizacijomis – su Europos Parlamentu. Nustatyta, kad bendradarbiavimas su profesionalais ir nacionaliniu, ir Europos Sąjungos lygiu lemia dažnesnius ryšius.

Disertaciniame darbe ištirta, kokią įtaką asociacijų elgsenai daro šie Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų sektoriniai požymiai: homogeniškumas, heterogeniškumas ir interesų koncentracija (verslo interesų asociacijos atstovaujama tam tikro sektoriaus rinkos dalis).

Atliktas kiekybinis tyrimas įrodė, kad Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos, atstovaujančios daugiau nei vienam ekonomikos sektoriui (heterogeniškos verslo interesų asociacijos), turi dažnesnius ryšius su savivaldybėmis nacionaliniu lygiu ir Europos Parlamentu Europos Sąjungos lygiu. Heterogeniškos verslo interesų asociacijos patiria daugiau vidinių prieštaravimų tarp narių, atstovaujančių skirtingoms sritims, todėl pasiekti kompromisą yra sudėtinga.

Kuo didesnei rinkos daliai atstovauja verslo interesų asociacijos (pasižyminčios didesne koncentracija), tuo dažnesnius kontaktus jos turi su Vyriausybe ir Seimu ir retesnius kontaktus su savivaldybėmis. Kita vertus, didele sutelktimi pasižyminčioms verslo interesų asociacijoms kyla grėsmė netekti narių, nes nauji nariai gali nestoti į asociaciją, numatydami, kad jų interesams gali būti atstovaujama be jų aktyvaus dalyvavimo ar išteklių paskyrimo.

Išvados

1. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų sandara nėra nuosekli: dominuoja nedaug narių turinčios nacionalinio lygmens asociacijos, yra gana daug asociacijų, veikiančių viename ir tame pačiame ekonomikos sektoriuje. Abi paminėtos verslo interesų asociacijos kategorijos yra gana silpnai organizuotos, disponuoja ribotais ištekliais ir turi nedaug ryšių su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir europiniu lygiu. Nemažas formalių, arba vadinamųjų „popierinių“, verslo interesų asociacijų skaičius Lietuvoje yra nulemtas įvairių paramos projektų ar programų, kuriomis remiamos asocijuotos veiklos, todėl verslininkams ar įmonių vadovams yra naudinga įkurti ‚formalias asociacijas. Ši išvada prieštarauja mokslinėje literatūroje dominuojančiai nuostatai, kad verslo interesų asociacijos yra įkuriamos ne dėl ekonominių priežasčių, nes verslo įmonės konkuruoja viena su kita ekonominėje srityje, bet kaip atsvara kitoms asocijuotoms struktūroms, veikiančioms visuomenėje, ypač profesinėms sąjungoms, taip pat siekiant atstovauti politiniams interesams. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų įkūrimas, paremtas rinkos priežastimis, silpnina

jų potencialą, ir tai daro neigiamą įtaką nacionalinio lygmens verslo interesų asociacijoms ir jų legitimumui. Lietuvos verslo interesų konfederacijos jungia silpnas, organizaciškai susiskaldžiusias, formalias regioninio lygmens verslo interesų asociacijas, kurios nėra pajėgios atlikti tikrųjų narių funkcijų. Nacionalinės verslo interesų asociacijos, jungiančios silpnus narius, veikia kaip profesionalūs verslininkų ar vadybininkų klubai, bet ne kaip tikros nacionalinės verslo interesų asociacijos.

2. Europos Sąjungos plėtra ir gilėjanti integracija daro įtaką nacionalinių institucijų struktūrai, tačiau tyrimo metu nenustatyta žymaus Europos Sąjungos integracijos poveikio Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenai ar ryšiams su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir europiniu lygiu. Dauguma Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų nėra prisitaikiusios prie pasikeitusios politinės aplinkos. Be to, Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų struktūra ir tinklas nėra galutiniai, kiekvienais metais Lietuvoje įsteigiama naujų asociacijų.

3. Verslo interesų asociacijos, veikiančios nacionaliniu ar Europos Sąjungos lygiu, priklausomai nuo tyrimo tikslo gali būti tiriamos ir vertinamos įvairiai: kaip atskiros organizacijos arba kaip organizacijų visuma su tik joms būdingais ryšiais su valdžios institucijomis, organizavimusi, elgsena, strategija ir pan. Demokratijos legitimumo modelis, priėjimo prie valdžios institucijų vertinimo modelis, europeizacijos teorija paremtas modelis – tai keletas galimų priemonių, taikomų vertinant verslo interesų asociacijų elgseną. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijos tirtos vadovaujantis disertaciniame darbe sukurtu ir pateiktu verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos modeliu, paremtu kompleksinių ryšių tarp verslo interesų ir valdžios institucijų teorijomis ir narystės logikos modeliu ir įtakos logikos modeliu. Skirtingų požiūrių ir modelių analizė padėjo sudaryti kompleksišką požiūrį į verslo interesų asociacijas ir modelį, galimą veiksmingai pritaikyti vertinant verslo interesų asociacijų elgseną nacionaliniu ir europiniu lygiu. Modelis buvo pritaikytas tyrimui nacionaliniu ir europiniu lygiu pirmą kartą ir pasitvirtino kaip veiksmingas modelis tiriant nacionalines verslo interesų asociacijas.

4. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų sistema yra tarpvyriausybiškumo (*intergovernmentalism*) teorijos atstovė, nes Lietuvos asociacijų dėmesio centre yra nacionalinės valdžios institucijos, ir su jomis verslo interesų asociacijos turi dažnesnius kontaktus nei kad su Europos Sąjungos institucijomis. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų įstojimo į europines verslo interesų asociacijas atvejai yra labai reti dėl išteklių ribotumo. Tačiau disertacinis darbas atkreipia dėmesį, kad daugiapakopio valdymo teorijos užuomazgos taip pat yra nustatytos. Nustatytas stiprių ir gerai organizuotų Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų trūkumas gali pastūmėti atskiras verslo įmones tiesiogiai pradėti atstovauti savo interesams valdžios institucijose ne tik nacionaliniu, bet ir europiniu lygiu, nes nacionalinių asociacijų pozicijos stiprumas europinėse asociacijose taip pat yra abejotinas.

5. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenai ir ryšiams su nacionalinėmis valdžios institucijomis įtakos turi nustatyti dešimt nepriklausomų kintamųjų: verslo interesų asociacijos dydis, geografinė aprėptis, amžius, narystė europinėse asociacijose, internacionalizacija, finansiniai ištekliai, žmogiškieji ištekliai, siūlomų veiklų diapazonas, bendradarbiavimo modeliai ir narystės heterogeniškumas. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenai ir ryšiams su Europos Sąjungos institucijomis

įtakos turi šešį nepriklausomi kintamieji: verslo interesų asociacijų internacionalizacija, finansiniai ištekliai, žmogiškieji ištekliai, bendradarbiavimo modeliai, asociacijos ekonominis svoris ir narystės heterogeniškumas.

6. Vienas iš pagrindinių organizuotų verslo interesų bruožų, išskiriantis jas iš kitų organizuotų interesų grupių, yra jų autonomija, t. y. nepriklausymas jokiai politinei partijai ar politinei jėgai. Verslo interesų asociacijos siekia atstovauti savo interesams ir daryti įtaką, nepriklausydamos politinei struktūrai. Dalis Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų turi stiprius „nematomus“ ryšius su politinėmis jėgomis, ir tai silpnina asociacijų autonomiją ir potencialą. Susilpnėjusi Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų autonomija daro neigiamą įtaką Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų ir valdžios institucijų ir visuomenės tarpusavio pasitikėjimui.

7. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsena yra stipriai veikiama Lietuvos politinės ir ekonominės santvarkos ir jos raidos ypatumų. Dalis Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų narių yra Lietuvos verslo įmonės, kurios turi „paveldėtų“ iš tarybinės santvarkos bruožų. Deja, tokios verslo įmonės nestiprina verslo interesų asociacijų, kurioms priklauso. Jų taip pat nestiprina nepakankamai gerai šalyje veikiančios darbuotojų asociacijos. Stiprios profesinės sąjungos galėtų sukurti stiprią atsvarą Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijoms ir padarytų teigiamą įtaką Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų sustiprėjimui ir vestų prie atskirų smulkių verslo interesų asociacijų susijungimo. Smulkių Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų susijungimas sudarytų sąlygas sutelkti finansinius ir žmogiškuosius išteklius ir sustiprintų asociacijų pozicijas, elgseną ir ryšius su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir europiniu lygiu. Valdžios institucijos savo ruožtu taip pat gali priimti teisines priemones, skatinančias silpnas ir stokojančias išteklių verslo interesų asociacijas susijungti, ir tai padidintų asociacijų galimybes.

8. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsena yra nukreipta į ekonominės gerovės kūrimą, neretai pastebimas veiklos neskaidrumas. Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų socialinės atsakomybės projektai, bendradarbiavimas su akademine bendruomene, jaunimo programų rėmimas ir pan. yra reti atvejai, tačiau jų padažnėjimas padėtų kurti verslo interesų asociacijų, kaip socialinės atsakomybės skatintojų, įvaizdį ir sudarytų sąlygas ryšių su valdžios institucijomis pokyčiams, skatintų atvirą dialogą su politinių sprendimų priėmėjais. Šiuo metu Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenoje dominuoja neveiksmingas požiūris, skatinantis ekonominės veiklos individualizmą, pasyvumą arba atsitraukimą į privačią ir uždarą sritį.

Siūlymai tolimesnei mokslinei diskusijai

Šiame disertaciniame darbe ne tik nustatyta ir pažymėta Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų vieta socialinių mokslų tyrimų tinkle šiuo metu, bet ir pateiktas išsamus Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenos ir ryšių su valdžios institucijomis nacionaliniu ir europiniu lygiu kiekybinis tyrimas ir išsami duomenų analizė. Šis tyrimas yra pagrindas tolesniems tyrimams, siekiant, kad tyrimai būtų paremti empiriniais duomenimis, o ne įspūdžiais, o taip ydingai, deja, dažnai daroma: apie Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijas pateikiama labai įvairios ir neretai tik nuomone pagrįstos informacijos įvairiais (ne visada patikimais) kanalais. Lietuvos verslo in-

teresų asociacijos, kaip tarpinės organizacijos tarp visuomenės ir valstybės, ir jų elgsena gali būti toliau tiriama, ir tokie tyrimai gali pateikti socialiniams mokslams įdomių rezultatų.

Šio disertacinio darbo tyrimo dalykas yra Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsena ir ryšiai su valdžios institucijomis. Pakeitus tyrimo dalyką ir tiriant valdžios pareigūnų – dažnai tiesiogiai bendraujančių su Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijomis – patirtį ir liudijimus, galima gauti naujų vertingų palyginamų rezultatų apie verslo interesų asociacijų elgseną. Analogiško tyrimo rezultatų interpretavimas ir palyginimas su dabartiniu disertaciniu darbu galėtų tapti moksliškai įvairių šiandieną fiksuojamų procesų vertingu paaiškinimu.

Atkreiptinas dėmesys, kad verslo interesų asociacijų tyrimų rezultatai negali būti tapatinami su atskirų privačių įmonių ir kompanijų politinės elgsenos tyrimo rezultatais, tačiau gali būti su jais lyginami ir gali suteikti moksliškai įdomių įžvalgų. Taip pat rekomenduotina tirti Lietuvos verslo interesų asociacijas vadovaujantis europeizacijos teorija. Analogiškas tyrimas, atliktas pasitelkus pateiktą kiekybinio tyrimo priemonių rinkinį po 5–6 metų, padėtų nustatyti moksliškai vertingus pokyčius, tai gali būti ir labai sudėtingas, ir labai įdomus mokslo procesas. Lisabonos sutarties įsigaliojimas, tikėtina, taip pat gali turėti įtakos verslo interesų asociacijų elgsenai, todėl šio aspekto tyrimas taip pat būtų įdomi pradėto tyrimo tąsa.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 QUESTIONNAIRE

Gerbiamoji/asis ponia/–e,

kviečiame Jumis dalyvauti šiuo metu atliekamame tyrime ir užpildyti šį klausimyną.

Tyrimo tikslas surinkti ir ištirti informaciją apie tai, kaip organizuojasi ir veikia Lietuvos verslo asociacijos/konfederacijos. Minėtajam tikslui pasiekti būtina Jūsų nuomonė šiame klausimyne pateiktais klausimais.

Jūsų dalyvavimas šiame tyrime yra labai svarbus – tai galimybė Jums patiems aktyviai daryti įtaką interesų atstovavimo strategijų tobulinimui. Tyrimo išvados ir rekomendacijos bus pateikiamos politinių sprendimų priėmėjams nacionaliniame ir europiniame lygmenyse.

Anketa anoniminė, Jūsų atsakymai – konfidencialūs. Anketoje nėra klausimų, kurie galėtų neigiamai įtakoti Jūsų veiklą.

Dėkojame už Jūsų atsakymus ir paskirtą laiką.

Klausimyno pildymo instrukcija

Klausimynas susideda iš uždarų ir atvirų klausimų.

Uždaruose klausimuose pakanka pažymėti **vieną** atsakymo eilutėje esantį rutuliuką □, kuris atitinka Jūsų nuomonę.

Pavyzdžiui:

Klausimas: Įvertinkite, pagal pateiktą skalę, Jūsų bendradarbiavimą su ES institucijomis. (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Bendradarbiavimo nėra	Nuoseklus bendradarbiavimas	Skalėje nuo „Nuoseklus bendradarbiavimas“ iki „Nenuoseklus bendradarbiavimas“ pasirinkite Jūsų vertinimą atitinkančią reikšmę				Nenuoseklus bendradarbiavimas
–Europos Komisija	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

Atviruose klausimuose pakanka parašyti glaustą atsakymą tam paliktoje erdvėje.

Pavyzdžiui:

Klausimas: Įvardinkite tris ES institucijas, kurios yra svarbiausios Jūsų interesų atstovavimui ir su kuriomis turite ryšius.

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

Jūsų asmeniniai komentarai ir pastabos apie atliekamą tyrimą yra labai svarbūs ir vertingi. Juos galite išdėstyti tam skirtoje lentelėje „Jūsų pastabos ir pageidavimai“ paskutiniame lape.

Mielai prašome užpildytą klausimyną grąžinti el –adresu: xxx

arba paprastu paštu šiuo adresu:
xxx

Jei pageidaujate gauti papildomos informacijos, dėl atliekamo tyrimo, mielai prašome kreiptis: Jolanta Grigaliūnaitė Tel. xxx; el–adresas: xxx.

Nuoširdžiai dėkojame už bendradarbiavimą.

I DALIS

Pirmojoje dalyje klausimynas analizuoja ryšius tarp Lietuvos verslo asociacijų ir Europos Sąjungos (toliau ES) bei nacionalinių sprendimus priimančių institucijų. Siekiama ištirti skirtingų ES bei nacionalinių institucijų svarbą atstovaujant interesus.

1. Ryšiai su ES institucijomis.
a) Jūs esate: (pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

Atstovauju **nacionalinę** verslo asociaciją □
Atstovauju **regioninę** verslo asociaciją □
Pareigos _____

b) Ar turite kontaktų su ES institucijomis? (Pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

Taip □
Ne □

Jei atsakėte „Ne" žr. **klausimą Nr. 3**.

c) Kaip vidutiniškai dažnai atstovaujate savo interesus ES institucijose? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Nei karto	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
Europos Komisija						
–Politinis lygmuo (komisarai ir jų kabinetai)	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Administracinis lygmuo (generaliniai direktoriai, padalinių vadovai, patarėjai)	□	□	□	□	□	□
Kitos ES institucijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
ES Taryba						
–Politinis lygmuo (ministrai)	□	□	□	□	□	□
–COREPER, darbo grupės	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Generalinis sekretoriatas	□	□	□	□	□	□
Europos Parlamentas (EP)						

	Nei karto	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
–Komitetai ir pranešėjai	□	□	□	□	□	□
–EP nariai ir jų padėjėjai	□	□	□	□	□	□
–EP sekretoriatas	□	□	□	□	□	□

2. Kaip vidutiniškai dažnai Jums pavyksta gauti reikiamą informaciją kreipiantis į ES institucijas? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Nebuvo kreiptasi	Nebuvo gauta nei karto	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
–Europos Komisija	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
– Kitos ES institucijos	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
–ES Taryba	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Europos Parlamentas	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

3. Ryšiai su nacionalinėmis institucijomis.
a) Ar turite kontaktų su nacionalinėmis institucijomis? (Pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

Taip □
Ne □

Jei atsakėte „Ne" žr. **klausimą Nr. 5**.

b) Kaip vidutiniškai dažnai atstovaujate savo interesus nacionalinėse institucijose? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Nei karto	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
Vyriausybė						
–Politinis lygmuo (Ministras Pirmininkas, ministrai, valstybės sekretoriai)	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Administracinis lygmuo (ministerijų departamentų vadovai, patarėjai)	□	□	□	□	□	□
Seimas						
–Politinės partijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Seimo nariai	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Seimo komitetai	□	□	□	□	□	□
Savivaldybė						
–Politinis lygmuo (Meras, tarybos nariai)	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Administracinis lygmuo (departamentų vadovai, patarėjai)	□	□	□	□	□	□
Kita						
.....	□	□	□	□	□	□
.....	□	□	□	□	□	□
.....	□	□	□	□	□	□

4. Kaip vidutiniškai dažnai Jums pavyksta gauti reikiamą informaciją kreipiantis į nacionalines institucijas? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Nebuvo kreiptasi	Nebuvo gauta nei karto	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
–Vyriausybė	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Seimas	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Savivaldybė	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

5. Institucijos reikšmingos interesų atstovavimui.
a) Įvardinkite tris (pradėkite nuo svarbiausios) ES institucijas, kurios yra svarbiausios Jūsų interesų atstovavimui.

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

b) Įvardinkite tris (pradėkite nuo svarbiausios) nacionalines institucijas, kurios yra svarbiausios Jūsų interesų atstovavimui.

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

c) Įvardinkite tris ES arba nacionalines institucijas (pradėkite nuo svarbiausios), kurios yra svarbiausios Jūsų interesų atstovavimui.

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

6. Kaip vidutiniškai dažnai Jūs atstovaujate savo interesus žemiau išvardintose sprendimų priėmimo stadijose? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Nei karto	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
ES institucijose						
–Darbotvarkės sudarymo metu	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Europos Komisijai rengiant pasiūlymą	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Konsultacijų su Europos Parlamentu metu	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Konsultacijų su Ministrų Taryba metu	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Teisės akto perkėlimo į nacionalinę teisę metu	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Teisės akto įgyvendinimo metu	□	□	□	□	□	□
Nacionalinėse insti-						

	Nei karto	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
tucijose						
–Darbotvarkės sudarymo metu	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Teisės akto svarstymo Seimo komitetuose/frakcijose metu	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Teisės akto svarstymo Vyriausybėje metu	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Teisės akto svarstymo Prezidento kanceliarijoje metu	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Teisės akto įgyvendinimo metu	□	□	□	□	□	□

7. Kaip vidutiniškai dažnai Jūs atstovaujate savo interesus žemiau išvardintais būdais? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Nei karto	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
–Pozicijos pristatymas raštu	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Asmeninio ryšio naudojimas	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Reguliarus pagrindinės informacijos tiekimas	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Tikslingos informacijos tiekimas	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Dalyvavimas komitetų ar komisijų veikloje, posėdžiuose	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Mokslinių ekspertizių/rezultatų pristatymas	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Bendradarbiavimas su kitomis grupėmis	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Viešosios nuomonės formavimas ir žiniasklaidos priemonių sutelkimas	□	□	□	□	□	□

	Nei karto	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
–Bylinėjimasis teisme	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Rinkiminių kampanijų rėmimas	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Protestai, demonstracijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Peticijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Informacinių komunikacijos priemonių naudojimas	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Kiti būdai (nurodykite kokie)						
–	□	□	□	□	□	□
–	□	□	□	□	□	□
–	□	□	□	□	□	□

8. Bendradarbiavimas su kitomis organizacijomis.
a) Ar Jūs bendradarbiaujate su kitomis organizacijomis atstovaudami interesus? (Pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

Taip □ Ne □

Jei atsakėte „Ne" žr. **klausimą Nr. 9**.

b) Kaip vidutiniškai dažnai Jūs bendradarbiaujate su žemiau išvardintais veikėjais atstovaudami savo interesus europiniame lygmenyje? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Bendradarbiavimo nėra	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėnesius	Kartą per mėnesį	Kartą per savaitę
–Ekspertai	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Nacionalinės asociacijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Europinės asociacijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Tarptautinės asociacijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Įmonės	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Konsultantai	□	□	□	□	□	□

	Bendra-darbia-vimo nėra	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėne-sius	Kartą per mė-nesį	Kartą per savaitę
–Mokslo organizacijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Profsąjungos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Nacionalinės visuomeninės asociacijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Europinės visuomeninės asociacijos	□	□	□	□	□	□

c) Kaip vidutiniškai dažnai Jūs bendradarbiaujate su žemiau išvardintais veikėjais atstovaudami savo interesus nacionaliniame lygmenyje? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Bendra-darbia-vimo nėra	Kartą per metus	Kartą per pusmetį	Kartą per tris mėne-sius	Kartą per mė-nesį	Kartą per savaitę
–Ekspertai	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Nacionalinės asociacijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Įmonės	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Konsultantai	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Mokslo organizacijos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Profsąjungos	□	□	□	□	□	□
–Nacionalinės visuomeninės asociacijos	□	□	□	□	□	□

d) Kokiam skaičiui nacionalinių konfederacijų priklauso Jūsų asociacija? (Pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

Nei vienai	□
1	□
2–5	□
6–10	□
Daugiau nei 10	□

e) Kokiam skaičiui europinių asociacijų priklauso Jūsų asociacija? (Pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

Nei vienai	□
1	□
2–5	□
6–10	□
Daugiau nei 10	□

II DALIS

Antroji klausimyno dalis skirta apibūdinti Jūsų asociaciją.

9. Jūsų asociacija atstovauja: (pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

Vieną sektorių (pvz. chemijos pramonė)	□	Įvardinkite kokį: .....
Daugiau nei vieną sektorių	□	Įvardinkite kokius: .....

10. Duomenys apie Jūsų asociaciją.

a) Kiek darbuotojų dirba Jūsų asociacijoje? Įrašykite _____

b) Keliems darbuotojams Jūsų asociacija yra pagrindinė darbovietė? Įrašykite _____

c) Ar Jūsų asociacijoje yra darbuotojų, kurie tiesiogiai dirba interesų atstovavimo srityje? (Pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

Taip □ Ne □

d) Kiek Jūsų asociacijos darbuotojų tiesiogiai dirba interesų atstovavimo srityje? (Pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

0	□
1	□
2	□
3	□
4	□
Daugiau nei 4	□

e) Kelintais metais buvo įkurta Jūsų asociacija? Įrašykite čia _____ m.

f) Ar Jūsų asociacija turi biurą/skyrių /atstovą Briuselyje? (Pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

Ne □ Taip, nuo _____ m. (įrašykite metus) □

g) Kiek narių yra Jūsų asociacijoje? Įrašykite čia _____

h) Jūsų nuomone, kokia dalis visų Jūsų srities įmonių Lietuvoje yra Jūsų asociacijos nariais?

1 – 25 proc. □
26 – 50 proc. □
51 – 75 proc. □
76 – 100 proc. □

i) Koks vidutiniškai yra Jūsų asociacijos metinis biudžetas (litais)? Įrašykite čia _____

j) Kokią dalį Jūsų asociacijos biudžeto sudaro žemiau išvardinti finansiniai šaltiniai? (Nurodykite procentais, bendra suma lygi 100 proc.)

–Nario mokestis	..... proc.
–Atlygis už teikiamas paslaugas	..... proc.
–Atlygis už parduodamas prekes	..... proc.
–Europos Sąjungos subsidijos	..... proc.
–Valstybės biudžeto alokacijos	..... proc.
–Kiti finansiniai šaltiniai (nurodykite kokie):	
.....	..... proc.
.....	..... proc.

k) Kas gali tapti Jūsų asociacijos nariu? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Taip	Ne
Fiziniai asmenys	□	□
Juridiniai asmenys	□	□
Juridinių asmenų asociacijos	□	□
Kitos profesionalios organizacijos	□	□

11. Duomenys apie Jūsų asociacijos narius.
**a) Kiek vidutiniškai darbuotojų įdarbinta Jūsų asociacijai priklausančiose įmonėse? **

Įrašykite čia _____

b) Kokią visų asociacijos narių apyvartos dalį sudaro trijų stambiausių asociacijos narių apyvarta? (Pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

1 – 25 proc.	□
26 – 50 proc.	□
51 – 75 proc.	□
76 – 100 proc.	□

12) Jūsų asociacijos vykdomos funkcijos.

a) Kokia dalis Jūsų asociacijos išteklių yra skiriama žemiau išvardintoms veikloms? (Nurodykite procentais, bendra suma lygi 100 proc.)

–Interesų atstovavimas	..... proc.
–Paslaugų teikimas nariams	..... proc.
–Rinkos koordinavimo priemonių vertinimas/analizė	..... proc.
–Kita veikla (nurodykite kokia):	
.....	..... proc.
.....	..... proc.

b) Kokias paslaugas Jūsų asociacija siūlo? (Vienoje linijoje pažymėkite vieną rutuliuką.)

	Taip	Ne
–Interesų atstovavimas	□	□
–Statistinės ar kt. Informacijos, apie Jūsų sektorių (–ius) teikimas	□	□
–Rinkos analizių atlikimas	□	□
–Juridinių ir ekonominių konsultacijų teikimas	□	□
–Tarpininkavimo paslaugų teikimas	□	□
–Viešieji ryšiai	□	□
–Profesinių apmokymų organizavimas	□	□
–Kitos paslaugos (nurodykite kokios):		
.....	□	□
.....	□	□

Klausimyno pabaiga
Prašome neužmiršti grąžinti užpildytą klausimyną.

Jeigu pageidaujate gauti atlikto tyrimo rezultatų analizę, mielai prašome nurodyti kontaktinį asmenį ir adresą, kuriuo pageidaujate gauti tyrimo rezultatus lentelėje „Jūsų pastabos ir pageidavimai“.

Dėkojame už bendradarbiavimą.

Jūsų pastabos ir pageidavimai:
.....
.....

****

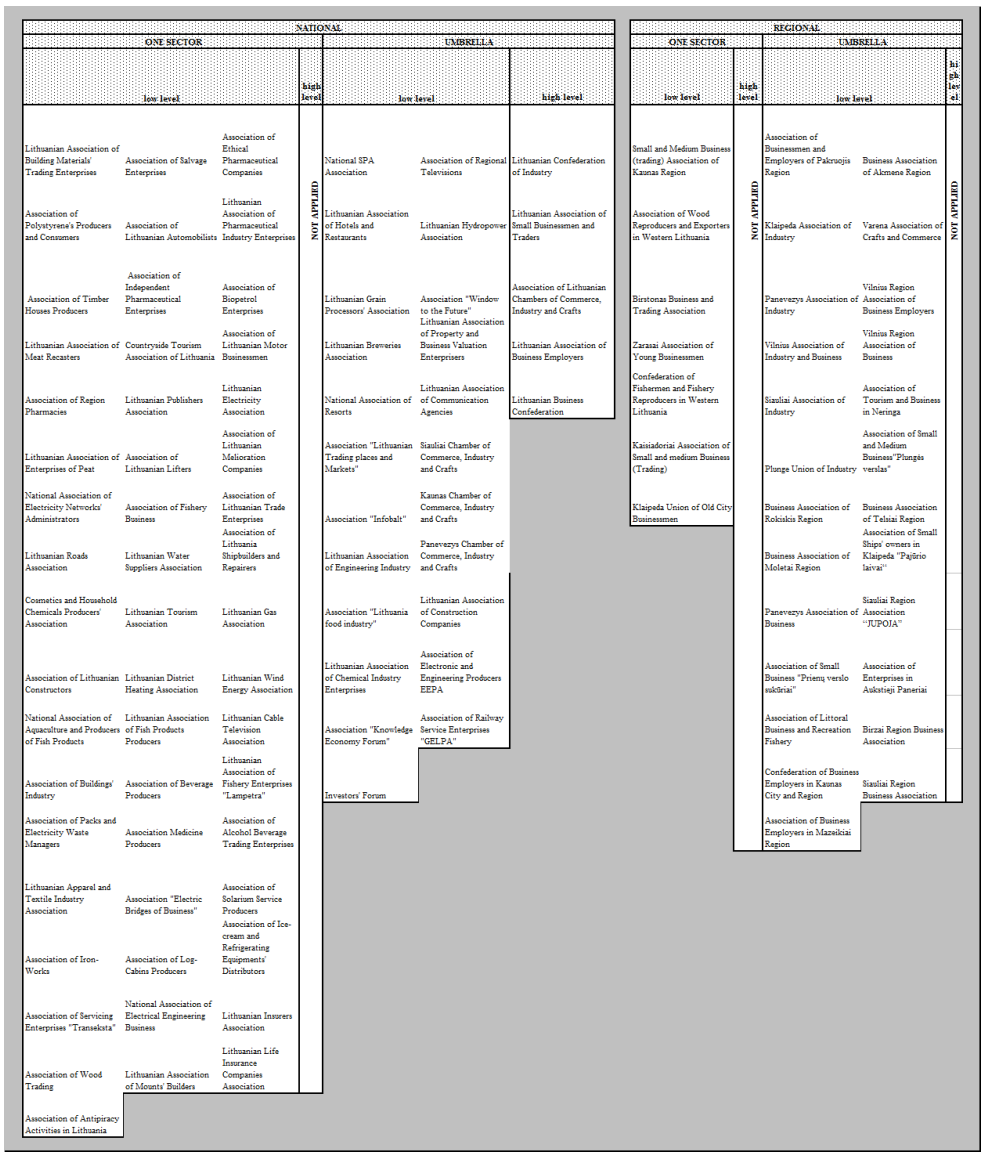
Overview of quantitative survey and return rate

Functional domain	Territorial domain	Sectoral domain	Hierarchical level	Questionnaires			Return rate
				Population	Sent	Returned	
Lithuanian BIAs	National	One sector	High level	0	0	0	
			Low level	74	74	52	
		Umbrella	High level	5	5	5	
			Low level	29	29	23	
	Regional	One sector	High level	0	0	0	
			Low level	9	9	7	
		Umbrella	High level	0	0	0	
			Low level	33	33	25	
			Total	**150**	**150**	**112**	**75%**

Who filled the questionnaire?

Position	Frequency	Percent
Director	31	27,7
Head of a Unit	23	20,5
President	19	17,0
Executive Director	7	6,3
Administration	6	5,4
Chief Accountant	4	3,6
Chair of the Board	3	2,7
Vice President	2	1,8
Director General	2	1,8
Vice Director General	1	0,9
Acting President	1	0,9
Acting Vice Director	1	0,9
Law Officer	1	0,9
Representative	1	0,9
Head of EU Affairs	1	0,9
Project Manager	1	0,9
Not indicated	8	7,1
Total	**112**	**100**

Map of surveyed Lithuanian business interest associations



ANNEX 3 RESEARCH CONSTRUCT INTERNAL CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

Internal consistency test[127] (survey Q3b) (N = 108)

Dimensions	Items	N items	Variance %	Cronbach α	L			r/itt		
					mean	min	max	mean	min	max
Government	Administrative level (heads of ministerial departments, advisers) Political level (Prime Minister, ministers, State secretaries)	2	**84,45**	**NA**	0,92	0,92	0,92	0,84	0,69	0,92
Parliament	Parliament memebers Parliament Committees Political parties	3	**82,37**	**0,95**	0,91	0,88	0,93	0,82	0,67	0,93
Municipality	Administrative level (heads of departments, advisers) Political level (Mayor, Board members)	2	**91,61**	**NA**	0,96	0,96	0,96	0,92	0,83	0,96

Internal consistency test (survey Q6) (N = 110)

Dimensions	Items	N items	Variance %	Cronbach α	L			r/itt		
					mean	min	max	mean	min	max
Preparation stage at EU level	Preparation of Proposals by European Commission Preparation of Political Agenda	2	**82,38**	**NA**	0,91	0,91	0,91	0,82	0,65	0,94
Consultation stage at EU level	Consultations with Council of EU Consultations with European Parliament	2	**91,89**	**NA**	0,96	0,96	0,96	0,92	0,84	0,96
Legal act implementation at EU level	Preparation of Legal Act Transportation of Legal Act into National Level	2	**85,15**	**NA**	0,92	0,92	0,92	0,85	0,70	0,94

[127] See complete list of abbreviations for the meanings. Source of all tables provided in the Annex 3: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the thesis framework.

Dimensions	Items	N items	Variance %	Cronbach α	L			r/itt		
					mean	min	max	mean	min	max
Legal act hearings at national level	Hearings in the Government Hearings in the President's Office Hearings in the Parliament Committees and Fractions	3	**68,27**	**0,89**	0,83	0,80	0,87	0,67	0,43	0,88

Internal consistency test (survey Q7) (N = 111)

Dimensions	Items	N items	Variance %	Cronbach α	L			r/itt		
					mean	min	max	mean	min	max
Strategies including direct representation	Regular provision of main information Provision of relevant information Participation at committees Position presentation in writing Presentation of expertise/research results	5	**54,87**	**0,87**	0,73	0,55	0,85	0,53	0,28	0,84
Strategies including information campaigns	Cooperation with other Groups Personal Contacts	2	**69,37**	**NA**	0,83	0,83	0,83	0,68	0,39	0,86
Strategies including confrontational forms	Petitions Protests, Demonstrations Litigation at Court (–) Supporting Election Compaign	4	**33,26**	**0,66**	0,54	0,33	0,74	0,28	0,05	0,63
Strategies including information means and media	Application of information communication instruments Public opinion formation/mass media rallying	2	**74,41**	**NA**	0,86	0,86	0,86	0,74	0,49	0,89

Internal consistency test (survey Q8b) (N = 93)

Dimensions	Items	N items	Variance %	Cronbach α	L			r/itt		
					mean	min	max	mean	min	max
Professionals	Consultants Experts Research Organizations	3	**75,08**	**0,92**	0,87	0,84	0,90	0,75	0,56	0,89
Other National Organizations	National Associations National Public Associations Companies Labour Unions	4	**65,95**	**0,90**	0,81	0,68	0,87	0,65	0,37	0,88
Other International Organizations	European Associations Intwrnational Associations European Public Associations	3	**67,43**	**0,89**	0,82	0,71	0,88	0,66	0,40	0,89

Internal consistency test (survey Q8c) (N = 94)

Dimensions	Items	N items	Variance %	Cronbach α	L			r/itt		
					mean	min	max	mean	min	max
Professionals	Experts Consultants Research Organizations	3	**67,01**	**0,89**	0,82	0,73	0,86	0,66	0,42	0,85
Other National Organizations	National Associations National Public Associations Labour Unions Companies	4	**49,22**	**0,81**	0,69	0,57	0,84	0,46	0,12	0,80

Internal consistency test (survey Q1c) (N = 44)

Principal components (1 factor model)		Alpha factoring	
Dimensions	**F1**	**Dimensions**	**F1**
European Parliament	0,90	Council of the EU	0,93
European Commission	0,87	European Commission	0,84
Council of the EU	0,85	European Parliament	0,73
Other EU institutions	0,35	Other EU institutions	0,33
Disemination – 60,74%		**Disemination – 53,70%**	

Internal consistency test (survey Q3b) (N = 108)

Principal components (1 factor model)		Alpha factoring	
Dimensions	**F1**	**Dimensions**	**F1**
Parliament	0,91	Parliament	0,85
Government	0,88	Government	0,79
Municipalities	0,38	Municipalities	0,32
Dissemination – 56,29%		**Dissemination – 51,03%**	

ANNEX 4[128]

Table 1 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with BIA's age

Contacts with EU institutions	BIA founded prior 1998 (N = 29)	BIA founded after 1998 (N = 18)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	24,3	23,5	251,5	0,828
European Parliament	23,7	23,3	247,5	0,915
Council of the EU	23,3	23,8	247,5	0,905
Other European institutions	22,5	22,6	233,0	0,975

[128] Source of the tables in Annex 4: provided by the author on the basis of the quantitative survey conducted in 2007–2009 within the framework of the thesis.

Table 2 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with BIA's size

Contacts with EU institutions	Up to 20 members (N = 23)	More than 20 members (N = 24)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	20,6	27,3	197,0	0,078
European Parliament	20,4	26,4	195,5	0,112
Council of the EU	23,4	23,6	261,0	0,938
Other European institutions	22,6	22,4	239,0	0,926

Table 3 Distribution of observations of contact patterns on national level with BIA' order type

Contacts with national institutions	Low–order BIAs (N = 26)	High–order BIAs (N = 78)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	58,5	50,5	857,5	0,236
Parliament	54,6	51,8	959,0	0,678
Municipalities	51,2	52,9	979,0	0,791

Table 4 Distribution of observations of contact patterns on EU level with BIA's order type

Contacts with EU institutions	Low–order BIAs (N = 10)	High–order BIAs (N = 36)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	21,3	24,1	157,5	0,529
European Parliament	23,5	22,9	170,0	0,885
Council of the EU	22,9	23,0	173,5	0,961
Other European institutions	21,0	22,3	155,0	0,698

Table 5 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at national level with financial concentration

Contacts with national institutions	Up to 25 % in whole members budget (N = 45)	More 25 % in whole members budget (N = 34)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	38,0	42,7	674,0	0,364
Parliament	36,3	44,9	598,5	0,098
Municipalities	43,3	35,6	615,0	0,133

Table 6 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at national level with share in budget for interest representation

Contacts with national institutions	Up to 50 % for interest representation (N = 56)	More than 50 % for interest representation (N = 46)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	52,7	50,0	1218,5	0,638
Parliament	51,5	51,5	1287,0	0,995
Municipalities	50,5	52,7	1234,0	0,713

Table 7 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with presence of human resources dealing directly with interest representation function

Contacts with EU institutions	No (N = 9)	Yes (N = 38)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	22,3	24,4	156,0	0,700
European Parliament	25,6	23,0	148,0	0,624
Council of the EU	25,1	23,1	152,5	0,703
Other European institutions	22,6	22,5	143,5	0,988

Table 8 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with number of employees dealing directly with interest representation function

Contacts with EU institutions	1 – 2 employees (N = 22)	More than 2 employees (N = 21)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	23,4	20,6	201,0	0,443
European Parliament	23,7	19,3	174,5	0,222
Council of the EU	21,6	21,4	217,5	0,928
Other European institutions	22,1	19,9	187,5	0,451

Table 9 Distribution of observations of contact patterns on national level with membership in national confederation

Contacts with national institutions	None (N = 40)	At least 1 (N = 51)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Government	46,3	45,8	1009,5	0,933
Parliament	46,5	45,6	999,0	0,866
Municipalities	41,5	49,5	839,0	0,143

Table 10 Distribution of observations of contact patterns on EU level with membership in national confederation

Contacts with EU institutions	None (N = 22)	At least 1 (N = 23)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	22,0	23,9	231,5	0,607
European Parliament	21,6	23,4	222,5	0,626
Council of the EU	22,1	22,9	234,0	0,820
Other European institutions	21,8	21,2	214,5	0,853

Table 11 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with membership in European BIAs

Contacts with EU institutions	None (N = 12)	At least (N = 34)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	18,0	25,4	138,5	0,085
European Parliament	18,3	24,5	135,5	0,150
Council of the EU	21,1	23,6	166,0	0,508
Other European institutions	18,7	23,1	139,5	0,170

Table 12 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with the scope of services provided

Contacts with EU institutions	Few services (N = 13)	Many services (N = 32)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	19,2	24,6	158,0	0,187
European Parliament	21,2	23,0	185,0	0,654
Council of the EU	22,1	22,7	196,5	0,876
Other European institutions	25,0	19,9	142,5	0,094

Table 13 Distribution of observations of interest representation strategies with budget

Interesų atstovavimo būdai	10 000 LT budget and less (N = 55)	More than 10 000 LT budget (N = 55)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Strategies including direct representation[129]	50,8	60,2	1254,0	0,122
Strategies including information campaigns[130]	51,2	59,8	1278,0	0,158
Strategies including confrontational forms[131]	56,7	54,3	1449,0	0,645

[129] Strategies including direct representation include personal contacts, cooperation with other groups.
[130] Strategies including information campaigns include presentation of expertise, participation at committees, provision of relevant information, position presentation in writing.

Interesų atstovavimo būdai	10 000 LT budget and less (N = 55)	More than 10 000 LT budget (N = 55)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Strategies including information means and media[132]	50,1	60,0	1213,0	0,096

Table 14 Distribution of observations of interest representation tactics and territorial domain

Interesų atstovavimo būdai	Regional BIA (N = 32)	National BIA (N = 80)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
Strategies including direct representation[133]	53,5	57,7	1184,5	0,538
Strategies including information campaigns[134]	57,3	56,2	1254,5	0,869
Strategies including confrontational forms[135]	55,5	56,9	1249,0	0,809
Strategies including information means and media[136]	56,8	55,7	1238,5	0,867

[131] Strategies including confrontational forms include protests and demonstrations, supporting election campaign, litigation at court, petitions.
[132] Strategies including information means and media include application of information communication means, public opinion formation/mass media rallying.
[133] Strategies including direct representation include personal contacts, cooperation with other groups.
[134] Strategies including information campaigns include presentation of expertise, participation at committees, provision of relevant information, position presentation in writing.
[135] Strategies including confrontational forms include protests and demonstrations, supporting election campaign, litigation at court, petitions.
[136] Strategies including information means and media include application of information communication means, public opinion formation/mass media rallying.

Table 15 Interrelation between contacts with national municipalities and BIA's cooperation patterns [137] (N min = 90; N max = 92)

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: contacts with national municipalities				
R	***R^2***	***df***	***F***	***Significance***
0,11	0,01	2 89 91	0,59	0,559

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: co-operation patterns	***Unstandardized B coefficients***	***Standardized Beta coefficients***	***Index t***	***Significance***
Cooperation with professionals	0,06	0,07	0,47	0,639
Cooperation with national organisations	0,04	0,05	0,36	0,722

Table 16 Interrelation between contacts with Council of the EU and BIA's cooperation patterns (N min = 41; N max = 47)

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: contacts with Council of the EU				
R	***R^2***	***df***	***F***	***Significance***
0,37	0,14	3 42 45	2,23	0,099

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: co-operation patterns	***Unstandardized B coefficients***	***Standardized Beta coefficients***	***Index t***	***Significance***
Cooperation with professionals	–0,01	–0,01	–0,05	0,957
Cooperation with national organisations	0,11	0,30	1,29	0,203
Cooperation with international organisations	0,07	0,12	0,64	0,527

[137] List of abreviations is presented at the beginning of the thesis.

Table 17 Interrelation between contacts with 0ther European institutions and BIA's cooperation patterns (N min = 41; N max = 47)

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: contacts with Other European institutions				
R	***R^2***	***df***	***F***	***Significance***
0,37	0,13	3 40 43	2,06	0,121

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES: co-operation patterns	***Unstandardized B coefficients***	***Standardized Beta coefficients***	***Index t***	***Significance***
Cooperation with professionals	0,05	0,21	0,79	0,436
Cooperation with national organisations	0,05	0,20	0,83	0,409
Cooperation with international organisations	–0,01	–0,04	–0,19	0,848

Table 18 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at national level with economic weight

Contacts with national institutions	**Other sectors (N = 12)**	**Manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade (N = 38)**	**Mann–Whitney U**	**Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p**
	Mean Rank			
Government	25,0	25,6	222,5	0,900
Parliament	21,1	26,9	175,5	0,230
Municipalities	22,5	26,5	191,5	0,401

Table 19 Distribution of observations of contact patterns at EU level with mobilization (number of enterprises representing certain market)

Contacts with EU institutions	25 % of the market (N = 12)	More than 25 % of the market (N = 31)	Mann–Whitney U	Asymp. Sig. (2–tailed), p
	Mean Rank			
European Commission	26,5	20,2	131,5	0,117
European Parliament	22,0	21,3	165,0	0,867
Council of the EU	24,7	20,4	135,5	0,232
Other European institutions	23,5	19,3	126,0	0,165